

APHRODITE

AND OTHER POEMS





John Martin
May 8.
APHRODITE
AND *Ball*
OTHER POEMS.

BY
A. STEPNEY GULSTON.

Imagination with fantastic grace

Will clothe the shadows which the sunbeams chase.

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1884.

LOAN STACK

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To My Mother.

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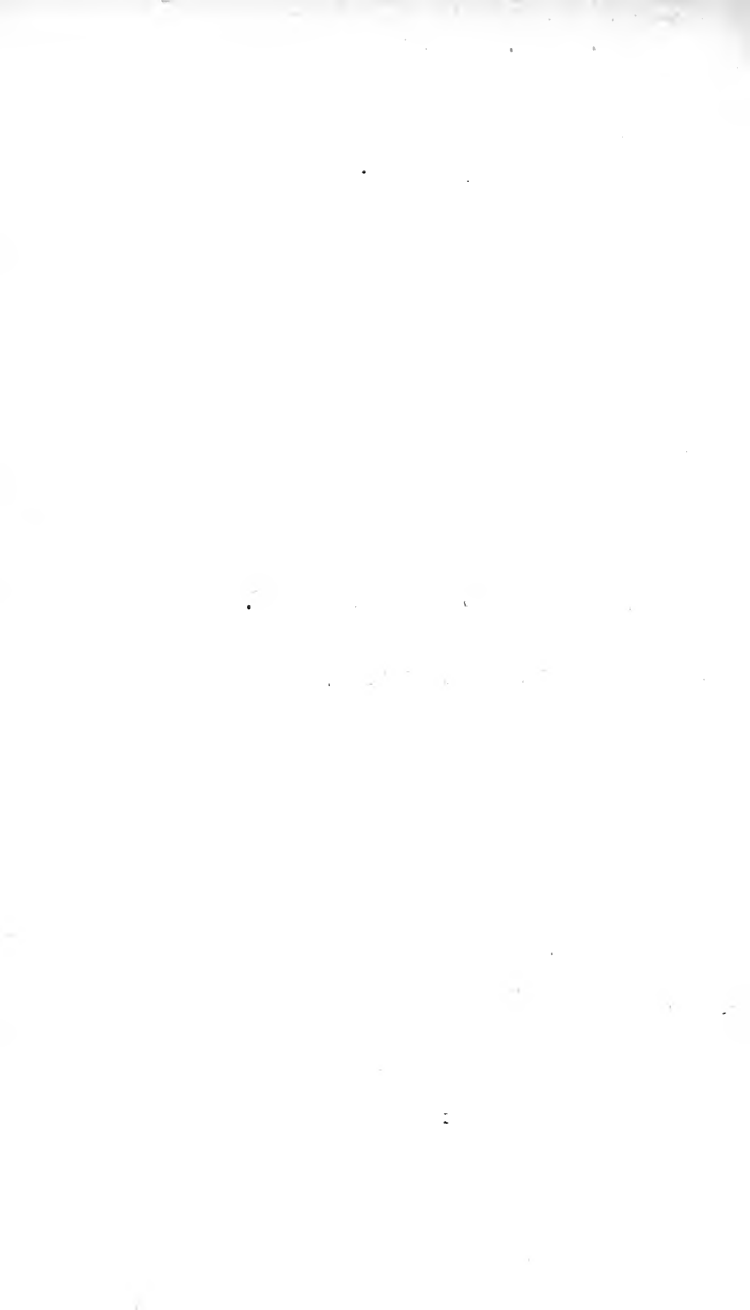
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APHRODITE ANADYOMENE.

AN IDYLL OF CAPRI.



APHRODITE ANADYOMENE,

OR,

CAPRI AT SUNSET.

Ἀφροδίτη ἀναδυομένη.

The birth-place of Aphrodite was claimed by, and generally conceded to, the island of Cythera, off the coast of Laconia ; and the earlier parts of her young life were laid claim to by many islands round the Mediterranean and Ægean Seas, especially by the island of Capri, situated at the upper end of the bay of Salernum, and by the existence of many temples dedicated to Aphrodite, as well as to Hermes and the worship of Eros, the "god of love," can be traced their worship at Pæstum and Baïæ and other places around Capri.

Ἀφροδίτη ἀναδυομένη was the name given by Apelles (the celebrated painter in the time of Alexander the Great) to his picture of Aphrodite, being one of the only three paintings to which he ever put his name, and which are described by Pliny 35, 36, 15, and is translated as "*Born of the foam, rising out of the sea*".

This poem is 366 lines in length, being of equal numbers with the days in leap-year, the year supposed to be specially dedicated to "Love and lovers".

"Aphrodite," by Grewze, in the National Gallery. In the catalogue there it is simply described as

"Head of a girl," by Grewze.

Also "Aphrodite and Hermes instructing Eros," by Coregio (Allegri), in the same Gallery, where in the catalogue the Latin names only are given.

APHRODITE ANADYOMENE.

AN IDYLL.

CAPRI AT SUNSET.

Lo ! the latine-sailed boats of song,
Filled from Amalfi's store,
Gliding Montangel's coasts along,
Make for Marina's shore ;
Like to some giant butterflies
Chasing the setting sun,
Spreading their wings athwart the skies,
Swift ere the day is done.
Floating across the foaming sea,
Dipping their gilded bows,

Making the rosy spindrift flee
Under their golden prow.
See you that distant crimson strand ?
There is fair Capri's isle ;
Born for a very fairy land
Under the Sun-god's smile.

APHRODITE AT REST.

Wafted along from realms above,
Down to this land alone,
Chanced to alight the soul of Love,
Queen of the golden zone.
Charmed by this em'rald ocean gem,
Rich with its heart of loam ;
Born, like herself, Time's flood to stem,
Out of the silv'ry foam.
Here she at length is fain to give
Rest to the cooing dove ;
Here she on earth first loves to live,—
Nay, more—first lives to love.

Ne'er had the foot of mortal man
 Pressed on that velvet sward ;
No conqu'ring eye had chanced to scan,
 Nor glanced that land toward.
Now hapt the Fates, high o'er the sea,
 Came flitting through the sky ;
Into her bow'r those sisters three
 Curiously did pry.
Then each old Hag her spindle took,
 And soon their threads decree :
"*Who shall on Aphrodite look,*
 Her sweet first-love shall be".

Oh ! is there ought on earth so rare,
 With wild enchantment fraught,
That can with perfect youth compare
 For love or wealth be bought ?
Not all the sapphire of the sea,
 Nor azure of the sky,
Nor ruby gold from Afride,
 One hour of youth can buy.
No god-like warrior e'er may tell
 The outcome of the strife ;

No power can wrest from Heaven or Hell
One single hour of life.
'Tis thus when perfect loveliness
In Nature's beauty dressed,
Her symmetry and comeliness
Are scarce by words expressed.

Beneath a panoply of gold,
Lulled by the rustling trees,
Whispering sweetly dreams untold,
Fanned by the souging breeze—
Garlands of rosebuds o'er her breast,
Emblems of love and bliss,
Seeking their crimson bloom to rest,
Clinging her lips to kiss—
Petals a blushing carpet pave,
Nestling her dainty head ;
Soft the child of the breaking wave
Sleeps on her rosy bed.
Gently the love-sick evening wind,
Sighing across the rocks,
Dies lest he chance a breath to find
Wooing her golden locks.

Shells of the sea which lie around,
 Roseate, soft, and smooth,
Steal from the waves their murmuring sound,
 Ever her sleep to soothe.
Birds of the sea, while skimming past,
 Gently their pinions ply ;
Waves of the sea, their form surpassed,
 Fall at her feet and die.

Gone at length is the western Sun,
 Gone is the light he gave ;
Tired Hyperion's race is run
 Into his wat'ry grave.
Darkling up from the ocean's brink,
 Silently twilight grows ;
Faint the last rays of sundown sink,
 Softly the night-wind blows.
Clear is the vaulted dome above ;
 Purest of light by far,
Shining to guard the Queen of Love,
 Rises the evening star.

THE MESSENGER OF HEAVEN.

Sudden a beam of glinting light,
 Fleeting across the skies,
Borne like a meteor through the night,
 Upward is seen to rise.
Hermes, the light-winged God of Speed,
 Bearing the sacred rod,
Wafting some word by Jove decreed,
 Messenger of the God.
Auburn his curling locks, and long,
 Hiding each pearly wing,
Youthful and light, and swift and strong,
 Brave as the lion-king ;
Laughing each glancing dark-blue eye,
 Melting with liquid light,
Seemed to have robbed the sapphire sky
 Under the wings of night.
Never a nobler form than this
 Born of immortal race ;
No heavenly step more proud than his,
 Moving with god-like grace.

Smiling o'er each dimpled cheek,
Soft with the down of youth,
Love seemed destined a mate to seek
Out of those lips of truth.

Swift was the glance his eagle eye
Swept o'er the darkling wave,
Warmed by the lurid sunset sky,
Spirit of evening's grave.
Still was the dewy fall of night,
Hushed was the Wind-god's breath ;
Silently dying out, the light
Sped in the arms of death.
Coldly the Moon arose and spread
Calmly, her ghostly spell ;
Under her light all life seemed dead,
Light of the shades in Hell.
Shuddering, Hermes spread his wings—
Sighing, he scarce knew why—
Soaring upward, light-hearted springs,
Onward his course to ply ;
When at his feet he chanced to mark
Something so pure and rare,

Lighted around by glow-worms' spark,
Fire-flies in the air,—
Seemed to his eye some secret nest,
Free from all cares of men,
Whither a soul might seek its rest,
Hidden from mortal ken.
Down like a thought so swift he sped,
Nigh to that sapphire sea—
There beheld, on her rosy bed,
Anadyomene.

What if the sun by night could shine,
What if the dead could live?
What if the gift the breath divine
Life to my words could give?
Oh ! that some power so dread, unseen,
Fraught with a strength untold,
Could from the sacred Muses ween
Gleams of that fire of old.
Would that some spirit of the air
Into my thoughts could bring,
Words that in writing would compare
Ought with what I would sing.

No pen e'er dipt in sacred fire,
No Bard such words e'er told ;
Nor song breathed on Apollo's lyre,
Uttered in words of gold.

Picture, each one his eye to please—
Fancy, let each run free ;
And what imagination sees
Further let each one see.
From each one's bright ideal height
Gaze from your thrones above ;
Look on the pearl-winged God of Light,
Picture the "Sire of Love".

LOVE WINS.

There on the threshold scarcely hid,
Trembling, the heavenly boy
Stands like a smile from dream-land bid—
Beautiful, bold and coy.
There like a dazzling sheen of snow,
Wrapt in a maiden's rest,

Lain at her side the golden bow,
Roses upon her breast—
Laughter-loving Cythera's Queen
Sleeps like a fairy dight,
Charming, he sees, though still unseen,
Thrilling his love-born sight.

As when the bee the honey steals,
Feasting with hungry sips,
So with a blushing smile he kneels,
Kissing her roseate lips.

When o'er the sea the gray mists shroud
Light from the dawn of day,
Quickly the sun dispels the cloud,
Wooed by a glinting ray.
As when the heart long wishful grown,
Sighing through hope deferred,
Sudden "He" comes his love to own,
Prayers at length are heard—
So with the touch of the winged-god's lips,
Softly the maiden sighs,

Scattering a rose with her finger tips,
Opens her dream-like eyes.

Oh ! that some limner's skill so rare
Could but the scene portray ;
Zeuxis ! Apelles !! who could dare ?
Who, but would answer nay ?
Paint it in words, describe in song,
Use every wile or art,
Nought can depict, no power so strong
Can tell how "heart meets heart".

Swift with a dainty cry she springs
Up like a startled fawn ;
He like a cherub 'neath his wings
Beams like a summer dawn.
Out through those liquid depths within,
Out through those lovelit eyes,
"Soul from soul" each seeks to win,
Blushing with sweet surprise ;
Gently their words, like drops of dew,
Wooing the harebell's tress,

Falling at eve so pure and true,
Scarcely their loves confess.

As eager like Tithonus' love,
Charmed by Aurora's hand,
Opening the pearly gates above,
Doth by her chariot stand—
So the angelic youth and maid,
Mingling their words with sighs,
Thrill with new love, yet half afraid,
Seeking each other's eyes—
Reading that book, whose words so deep,
Filled from a fount so rare,
There in the eye, a single peep
Shows what a heart will dare ;
There in her tender loving glance,
There in his manly eye,
Mutual love their souls entrance,
There their first loves descry.

Oh ! what a living world is this,
Teeming with joyfulness ;

Oft blest in youth with endless bliss,
In age with peacefulness.
Would that my heart could burst its bonds,
My soul take wings in flight,
Soon would dispel with fairy wands
All the dread ills of night—
Driving away dull care and sin,
Then would a blessing fall
Throughout the world, all men should win
Grace from the love of all.
Thus, then, old age would rest in peace,
Manhood in hope would live ;
Youth in its love would love increase,
Pledges eternal give.
So with our pair, lest time should slip,
Lover-like, nothing loth,
Hand in hand sit, lip to lip,
Pledging their mutual troth.

Dear to the gods are lovers' vows,
Dear is each tender sigh ;
Dear to the youth her penciled brows
Shading her liquid eye.

The bloom is richer on her cheek,
Pink as the rip'ning peach ;
Softly their meaning glances speak
Unutterable speech.

Is it the Ichor from above,
Tinging the ambient blood,
Causes their hearts to taste of love,
Burning with passions flood ?
Is it that Capri's sacred isle,
Warmed by a southern sun,
Causes their lips with love to smile,
Swifter the blood to run ?
Is it the witching hour of night,
Charmed by such perfect grace,
That leaves those two a pure delight,
Sealed with a sweet embrace ?

What is the hour men call divine :
Is there beneath the sun
A time which shall for aye enshrine
Thoughts from a lover sprung ?

Marking a maiden's tender blush
 Beneath his eager eye,
Each whisper taught with gentle hush
 Love's anguish with a sigh?
Can all the meaning of the heart,
 Its ecstasy, its power,
The wonders of the Love-god's dart,
 Be felt in one short hour?

THE BRIDAL OF LOVE.

Up rose the early dawning light,
 Forth led Apollo's car ;
Aurora danced in wild delight,
 Chasing the morning star.
Beaming, the dome of heaven above,
 Blushing with gold and red,
Rose like a canopy of love
 Over their nuptial bed.
All the universe seemed to smile,
 The wind soft music played ;

The ocean blazed round that love-blest isle,
Flecked with the passing shade.
Hermes, that god of beauty, strode
Forth from the bower of bliss,
Leading her from that sweet abode,
Bribed by a lover's kiss.

Lo ! what a world of pleasure lies
Wrapt in the gentle boon
Sought by a man, in wifely eyes,
First in their honeymoon.
Knit by a loving bond, they twain
Pass to the silv'ry shore ;
Scarce can they from their loves refrain—
Ne'er had they loved before.
Such bridal home fair Capri gave
The winged God from above ;
Such to the child of Ægeus' wave,
Queen of the realms of Love.

THE CRADLE OF EROS.

How quickly the heaven-born hours flit by—
For Aphrodite new care is nigh—
A cradle she fashions of three palm leaves,
Together with soft silken flax she weaves ;
A lining she takes from a wild swan's nest,
Then fills with the down from the ring-dove's breast
A coverlet spun from the spider's web,
Embroidered with foam from the south sea's ebb ;
A border of sweet-scented blush moss-rose
She doth as a fairy-ring round dispose.
A bright blow-bubble is severed in twain—
The handiwork deft of her heavenly swain—
And with it a canopy overhead
She shelters the crown of this dainty bed.
A sunflower's bloom as a shade she takes,
A fan from a gossamer wing she makes ;
A silver-gauze tent then she next unfurls ;
The cradle she rests on three ocean pearls ;

Then whisp'ring a love-spell into the air,
She doth for the little god-gift prepare.

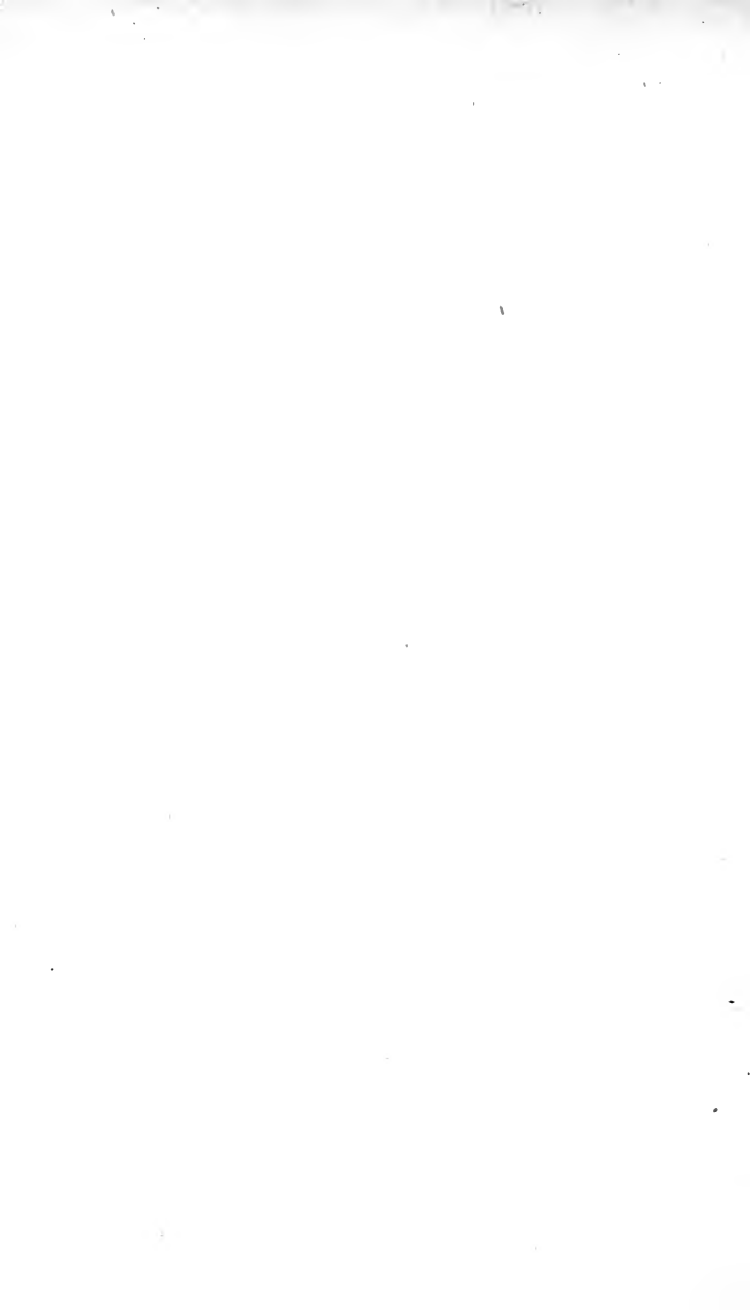
What echo that floats through the morning air
Of music resounding so pure and rare?
The busy bees humming their soft bee voice,
Seem bent upon making all things rejoice.
Hyperion wreathed in a beaming smile,
Uprising with glory o'er Capri's isle,
Expanding each flower with his morning ray,
Clad brighter as though for some festal day.
The swallows and swifts, with their joyous cry,
Seem lighter their curving long wings to ply;
The souging west wind in its restless doom,
Wafts scents from the "Olea fragrans" bloom;
And butterflies flit from the orange groves—
All hailing the birth of the *Prince of Loves*.

With fair Aphrodite, the kings of the air
Rejoice at the birth-right of Hermes' heir;
For Eros, predestined by fates above,
Shall conquer the world by the power of Love.

CAPRI AT SUNSET.

Again the race of day is run,
Leaving a purple track ;
The stars come peeping one by one,
Over the dark night-rack.
O'er Capri's isle the silent dew,
Fresh from the springs above,
Seeking all nature to renew,
Falls like a shower of love.
Blest is that happy island home,
Child of the western wind ;
If ye throughout the wide world roam,
Ne'er such a spot will find.
An I could like the Siren wile,
This were my magic cry :
“ *Would ye be blest, see Capri's isle
Once ere your soul shall die*”.

A BACHELOR'S REVERIE.



A BACHELOR'S REVERIE.

I sit me down in silence,
Free from cares of daily life,
And musingly forgetful
Of this world and all its strife—
I close my eyes, and dreaming,
Let my mem'ry gently glide,
Recalling by-gone hours,
By my lonely fireside.

At first the shad'wy outline
Of my lifetime's early youth,
With pictures of my after-life,
Seem mingled with the truth.

A shade of some beloved,
Long lost friendship flits athwart
My vision, like a phantom,
With a train of sorrow fraught.

And then confusing mem'ry
Of some pleasure past and gone,
Is waft across the mirror,
Like the breath of summer dawn ;
And many voices echo
Through my "castles in the air,"
And sympathetic actors
Mark what I could "do or dare".

I see the loving faces,
And a mother's tender smile ;
And mark the heart-felt pleasure
From her "Baby's" ev'ry wile :
The little boy whose babble
Fills her eyes with spark'ling pride,
And sweet prognostications
She does oft for him betide.

Now ripp'ling streams of laughter
 Seem to fill the air around ;
I smile across my glasses,
 Almost startled at the sound.
Ah ! then a sigh half smothered,
 And I see those youthful days,
That sunlit beaming boyhood,
 With those laughing boyish ways.

And then I well remember
 How my heart first felt its woe,
When fairy-like Cecelia
 Pouted forth her dainty " No ".
How wild I rushed, and sadly,
 To some desert place, and cried :
" Oh ! loved, deceitful woman,
 Thou for whom I could have died ".

There is a stream that, flowing,
 Swiftly bears upon life's way
The mem'ry deep, that growing,
 Brightens still through sorrow's ray ;

And, like the upland brooklet,
 Early love springs pure and bright ;
It swells until its volume
 Flows majestic in its might.

And, mingling with some other
 Sweet and flowing virgin flood,
They twain become one river,
 Like two lovers understood—
Who, sharing joy and sorrow,
 On will travel hand in hand,
Entwined within each other,
 Till they gain the “happy land”.

I see the shimm’ring wavelets,
 O’er a lonely Alpine lake,
Like jewels fallen earthward,
 Ere the sun-god is awake ;
The dewy breath of morning
 Fans the summer-tinted sky,
That ushers in the dawning
 Of the “dayspring from on high”.

Eternal as the mountains—

Aye ! and purer than the snow ;
Far deeper than the fountains
From which giant waters flow ;
Unchangeable as ages,
More inscrutable than time,
Man's heart, beneath love's sunshine,
Melts away like winter rime.

I see again those forests,
And that grand primæval pass,
Those overhanging " châteaux,"
And that wond'rous " Mer de glace ".
I hear the tinkling cattle,
Far away upon the Alp,
And see the frowning snow-peak
Rear its everlasting scalp.

The morning star is fading
From the azure overhead,
The morning sun is rising,
And the sky is rosy red ;

And ev'ry star of heaven
Seems to close its watchful eye,
As though Aurora's beauty
Must eclipse Diana's sky.

A melody of singing,
Like some bell or magic flute,
Comes floating down the valley—
'Tis my darling's love-salute.
Her tread is light and dancing—
She comes laughing to my side ;
I clasp my loving sweetheart—
She is pledged to be my bride.

Her smile, bright as the blazon
Which precedes the rising sun ;
Her eyes, soft violet tinted,
Like the glow when day is done ;
Her golden hair like daylight,
And her skin so soft and clear :
If snow fell nigh, through sorrow
It would melt into a tear.

Then, too, her soul's own halo
Sheds its mystery around,
Which, fortified with pureness,
Seems to say, "'Tis hallowed ground".
Her nobleness in speaking,
And in doing all that's kind ;
Her loving self-denial,
And her gentle cultured mind.

Oh ! why will Time run riot,
When a cycle were to short ;
Like imps the minutes flying,
Making love-trysts all their sport.
We looked into each other's
Eyes, each longing more and more—
Each thrilling with love's anguish,
Like true lovers, to the core.

No words can tell, no music,
Neither painter's art descry,
The union of two love-hearts,
Or the language of the eye.

To gaze into the liquid
 Depths of eyes we dearly love,
Seems like a glimpse of heaven,
 Filled with glory from above.

'Tis there alone the fancy
 Seems to leave this earthly clay,
And God's Almighty Spirit
 First to claim its perfect sway.
And while those eyes still truly,
 And with pure frank love can smile,
So only lives the God-gift
 That in loving knows no guile.

'Tis said by Eastern sages
 That each person, ere he dies,
May smell the Rose eternal
 Once, which fell from Paradise.
Oh ! then, on me that hour
 Came all filled with perfect bliss ;
The golden Rose enthralled me,
 When I gave that first long kiss.

We wooed with tender yearnings,
Sighing more than words can say ;
We wooed till dewy evening
Gently wooed the passing day.
With longing looks we parted,
Wishing each a sweet "good-bye" ;
Her lips smiled forth "My loved one,"
While a tear stood in her eye.

A boat across the lakelet,
And I speed me with a sigh ;
Once more a distant hand-wave,
With her form against the sky,—
And then upon my bosom
Falls a dark and silent gloom,
Some horrible foreboding,
Like the wraith of pending doom.

The night comes looming darkly,
And I hear the rustling wind ;
I startle at the lightning
And the thunder-roll behind.

The midnight storm, relentless,
 Brings the roaring avalanche ;
I pray the Lord's protection
 For my heart, my darling Blanche.

Up rose the morning sunlight
 O'er that valley cold and gray ;
The torrents rolled, o'erflowing
 With their boist'rous foam and spray.
Up rose the hardy Switzer,
 And anon came running wild,
A youth from up the valley,
 And he brought a little child.

"'Tis all," he cried, " that's living
 From that valley up the mount ;
The 'avalanche' descended
 From the spring called 'Giant's Fount' ;
And, sweeping through the passage
 'Twixt the Wolf-crag and the Cross,
Swept all away, scarce leaving
 Us to tell this awful loss."

Then blank my life, and dreary—
All was dull and dead to me ;
I dreamed of nameless terror,
Fraught with awful destiny.
Methought I saw my darling,
And her voice seemed soft and clear—
And, stretching forth a loving hand,
She whispered in mine ear :

*“ Your love I am for ever,
And your heart I take with mine ;
They twain shall live together
In true ecstasy divine.
But look thou on no other
Woman, how so fair she be ;
For cursed shall prove another
Who shall share her love with thee.”*

The scene again is shifted,
And ten years have passed away ;
While time has soothed the heart-ache
Since that dread and fatal day.

I wander nigh the river,
And there's one walks by my side,
Whose hand returns my pressure,
And whose lips are not denied.

We wander there in silence,
Nought disturbs our happiness ;
The darkling stream beneath us
Seems our mutual love to bless.
And then she says, "Oh ! tell me,
Tell me once again," she cries,
"How much it is you love me,
While I read it in your eyes".

I say, "I love you, darling,
More than love e'er loved before" ;
She presses soft my bosom,
Saying, "Love, I love you more".
When, lo ! a sudden chilling,
And a feeling numb and cold,
An icy wind comes howling
Up from off the marshy wold—

And then, above those waters,
A "White Lady" seems to rise ;
It swells in ghastly volume,
Till it reaches to the skies ;
And, like a distant echo,
Comes again this wild decree :
*"For cursed shall prove another
Who shall share her love with thee".*

My love springs up, and gaily
Trips towards the river's brink—
Her foot slips, and I see her
'Neath those silent waters sink.
Oh ! God, I rush with horror
Down that steep and rocky bank,
And plunge into those waters,
Where her darling form had sank.

I struggle in that river—
Darker now, the day has fled—
And vainly strain my eyes and moan,
And wish that I were dead.

I feel my breath is failing,
And my strength is on the wane ;
No human aid can save her—
She will ne'er be seen again.

My "Reverie" is over,—
No more hopes or fears divide
The mem'ries which I cherish
Near my lonely fireside ;
Though still before my eyesight
There indelibly is fixed
A lovely face, a sinking form,
With which a wraith is mixed.

There is upon the mountain,
Far away, a lonely cross ;
And here a mound, where often
I would mourn with sad remorse.
Whene'er I seek the latter,
I still hear that wild decree :
"*For cursed shall prove another*
Who shall share her love with thee".

THE DEMONS' HUNT.

A LEGEND OF THE BLACK FOREST.

THE DEMONS' HUNT.

A LEGEND OF THE BLACK FOREST.

IN a dark vale of Germany

There is a silent cave,

Where the gray cliffs rise

T'ward the lofty skies,

And tow'ring pine trees wave.

Out from the mouth of this wild spot,

Soft murmuring o'er the stones,

With scarce egress

Through deep recess,

A streamlet softly moans.

Down in that drear and lonely glen,
Down in that darksome dell,
On all holy nights
Would fell demon sprites
Their hellish stories tell.

There in that dank and yawning den,
Their rites wood-demons hold,
And howling amain
Over victims slain,
Gloating o'er deeds untold.

And in the awful darkling night,
Demons in council meet,—
All shouting till day
Their direful lay—
“*Seek we of man to eat*”.

Their meat is flesh from infants torn,
Their drink is purple blood ;
And their fiendish routs,
And their yelling shouts,
Loud echo through the wood.

But under the lowering heavens,
Mingled with shrieks, is heard
The maddening hue
Of that demon crew—
“*Death to the damning herd*”.

Sudden they hear a rustling noise,
And see a maiden fair,
Who wand’ring astray
On that fatal day,
Gazed on that fiendish lair.

They quick, with one accord, pursue—
Each seizing a firebrand ;
But with footsteps light,
She in timid flight
Escapes the yelling band.

Their shouts are heard, she screams aloud—
Away like the wind she flies ;
Till she falls at length,
In her failing strength,
And lays her down, and dies.

The Demons, from her snowy breast,
Her spirit quickly tear ;
And flinging it out,
With a hallooing shout,
They hunt her through the air.

Their yells are heard, her shrieks arise,
As in her winged flight
She tries to evade
That hellish crusade,
And flies before their might.

The horns they sound, the hounds they bay,
As through the moon-lit sky
The soul of the maid,
And that godless raid,
Rapidly onward fly.

The wood-cutter the rout doth hear
On every holy night ;
At the savage yell
Of those hunters fell,
Will tremble with affright.

The horns they sound, the hounds they bay,
 Until the shiv'ring morn—
When those hunters wild,
And that fleeting child,
 Vanish at breath of dawn.

But nigh at hand has come the time,—
 No more those hounds shall bay,
Nor that soul speed out,
When those Demons shout
 Their fiendish roundelay.

The great Creator marks the day,
 And to that maiden's soul
Gives the power to make,
T'wards that Stygian lake,
 Dread of those huntsmen foul.

Bravely she wings her daring flight
 Down to that ghastly brink ;
And the fiends in their haste,
Her spirit to waste,
 Into the vortex sink.

Hushed, and for aye,—no more shall sound,
 On any holy night,
The distracting yell
Of those hunters fell,
 Across the pale moonlight.

Only a gentle spirit form
 Is waft across the sky ;
And the woodman knows
How a blessing flows
 Where'er her wraith shall fly.

ST. MICHAEL'S MOUNT AND TOMBÉLÈNE.

A LEGEND OF NORMANDY.

ST. MICHAEL'S MOUNT AND TOMBÉLÈNE.

A LEGEND OF NORMANDY.

A ROMAUNT.

“St. Michael’s Mount” and “Tombélène” are two small islands of granite situated in the Bay of Avranches, between the coasts of Normandy and Brittany, and at high tide are surrounded by many miles of sea. The island of “Tombélène” is very difficult of approach at low water, on account of the treacherous nature of the quicksands, which extend all around the ever-shifting mouths of the rivers Couesnon, Sey, and Selune.

INTRODUCTION.

So clear was night,
The moon-shed light
Lay o’er the ocean calm ;

The curving bay,
The headland gray,
Slept 'neath a silver charm.

As still as death,
No single breath
Wafted on high was found,
To bear away
The wave-worn lay
Solemnly murmuring round.

The giant rock
There seemed to mock
Time's everlasting test,
With flowing tide
On ev'ry side,
Mount of St. Michael's rest.

The distant land,
The silv'ry strand,
Shone like a phantom shore,—
Where bathed afar
Some golden star,
Fallen for evermore.

Far o'er the plain,
Where bounds the main,
 Couesnon winds her stream ;
And through the night
Her "Lady White"
 Floats like a misty dream.

Wand'ring alone,
Near "Michael's Stone,"
 High on the Sacred Tower,
I chanced, oppressed,
My limbs to rest,—
 Lulled by the 'witching hour.

Softly the breeze,
Across the seas,
 Wafted a weird spell ;
My sleeping ear
Then seemed to hear
 Words I may scarcely tell :—

Strange words I trow,—
A broken vow,
 Tale of days long gone by ;

Doom of the brave,
Past to the grave,
Deeds that will never die.

The fates insist,
Ye friends who list,
Hearken while mem'ry sings,—
Actions uncouth,
Manhood and youth,
Story of wondrous things.

AN ANCIENT ROMAUNT.

A Legend of Normandy.

Within the bosom of retreat
Enshrined, there lies a village sweet,—
St. Leonard's haunts are nigh,
Where oft he loves, with list'ning ear,
At e'en, o'er misty moss, to hear
The Herne or Bittern's cry.

Beyond this lonely marsh the sea,
Along the coast of Normandy,
 Flows with a sweeping flood ;
Across the sands, between the shore
And Tombélène,—three miles or more,
 That isle of crime and blood.

An ancient tower's ruined walls,—
Which larger loom as evening falls
 Upon that dark stronghold,—
In gaunt despair, seems standing there,
Wild wreck of deeds which heroes dare,
 Which time may scarce unfold.

There is within that solemn keep
A springing well, both pure and deep,
 And bright like spark'ling youth ;
Just where, 'tis said, some love to trace,
Concealed from falsehood and disgrace,
 The lonely haunt of truth.

But, lo ! within this darkling well
Lie buried deep the traces fell
 Of deeds of dread and doubt ;

And hov'ring o'er, at eventide,
The wraiths are seen of those that died,—
For murder fain will out.

Ten thousand years may pass away,
But ne'er on earth so dire a day
Shall dawn again, nor can
A pale moon mark so foul a deed,
Nor night-wind waft a curse decreed,
So woeful in its ban.

One time—(for thus the spell words ring)—
When noble Hugh Capet was king,
A long, long while ago,
When knights with high-born dames would dance,
And joust in proof of love for France,
Then forth to battle go.

When maids would from their kirtles tear
Some badge each gallant knight should wear,
Bound to his lordly crest,
And blessings breathe as they depart;
Each from the true-love of his heart
Would bear an aching breast.

But, lo ! what joy would sound galore,
When trumpets tell the fight is o'er,
 When back the conqu'rors turn ;
The valiant heroes doff the sword,
And seek in smiles their sweet reward,—
 Will maids brave lovers spurn ?

Now, “once upon a time,” I say
(So rang that weird roundelay),
 There lived a noble knight ;
Throughout the land his manly face,
His lofty mien and lordly grace,
 Bid youth and age delight.

For Eustace, called “The Norman Knight,”
Or “Norman Hardy,” bold in fight—
 Beloved by comrades brave ;
No lack of deeds,—with gen'rous hand,
He through the length and breadth of land,
 Kind help to each one gave.

While wand'ring in the sunny south,
Beyond Rhone's yellow-tinted mouth,
 On knightly errand bent,

He wooed and won, with gallant pride,
 The Lady Una for his bride,—
 Old race of high descent.

He brought her to his castle gate,
 Escorted by “The Duke” in state
 (The Duke of Normandy),
 Who loved Sir Eustace, and as lord
 Right justly loved that trusty sword,
 If e’er in jeopardy.

The beauteous Lady Una’s grace,
 Her lustrous eye and smiling face,
 Set manly hearts on fire ;
 Her raven locks and glances bright
 Were sung by ev’ry gallant knight,
 By duke and lowly squire.

One time the Duke, beneficent
 (Surnamed “*the great magnificent*”),
 A tournament declared ;
 And summoned ev’ry vassal fief ;—
 The prize, a lady’s handkerchief,
 By Beauty’s hand prepared.

Thus, then, by prospects bold enticed,
Full eagerly to keep their tryst,
 Came courtly Lords and Dames ;
Soon filled their liege's garrison,
With steeds in brave caparison,
 To join in knightly games.

There rode the Lord of Ducy's might,
The proud old Montmorency's knight,
 His Squire du Harcouet ;
And frowning came Pontorson's Lord,
The knight of the two-handed sword,
 The Sieur de Carhouet.

The noble châtelain of the Mount,
St. Michael's guardian, Quentin Blount,
 Three stalwart sons, and more ;
Than fifty warriors in his train,
Who vauntingly would in disdain
 The Duke as liege ignore.

Then came St. Brice of Outremer,
De Fontenay and Valdemer,
 Hombaye and Turlaville ;

The aged Seigneur of Avranches,
 And all the notables of Manche,
 From Ponts to Anderville.

Such lords were there, their ladies fair,
 A gorgeous sight beyond compare,
 And scores of knights beside ;
 All armed for jousting "cap-a-pie,"
 The cream and flower of "chivalrie,"
 Sir Eustace and his bride.

The Duke, though bold and proud was he,—
 "*Magnificent*" of Normandy,—
 Was seen to fret and fume
 Whene'er Sir Eustace broke a lance,
 If Lady Una's lovely glance
 Should seek her husband's plume.

She too seemed nothing loath, 'twas said,
 When o'er her steed the Ducal head
 Would bend with smiling grace ;
 Who then shall say why gleamed his eye,
 Why converse ended with a sigh ?
 She came of Southern race.

How rode Sir Eustace in the lists,
And conquering all antagonists,
 Received the wished-for prize,—
The handkerchief from Beauty's hand,—
Helen, the loveliest in the land,
 The cynosure of eyes.

Fair Helen of St. Michael's Mount,
The daughter proud of Quentin Blount,
 The chosen "Beauty's Queen";
The idol of her Northern race,
Her father's look, her mother's grace ;—
 Such beauty ne'er was seen.

Oh ! who can blame Sir Eustace, when
On bended knee, the first of men
 Her dainty hand should kiss,—
Or wreathed with smiles, that Helen's face
Should mark with pride his manly grace,
 Nor feel his glance amiss.

But when Sir Eustace turned and saw,
What scarce he dared believe before,
 In Lady Una's look,—

The Duke beside with tender eye,
She answering with meaning sigh,
His fury scarce could brook.

Full soon he found how base and vile
Was Lady Una's every wile ;
She left him for the Duke.
He sought in vain her steps to turn,
She did but with black glances spurn
His broken heart's rebuke.

Now roamed Sir Eustace, sword in hand,
And left in wrath his native land ;
He sought Saint Michael's Mount.
Right welcome there, with warriors brave,
To help his cause, with spear and glaive,
Then swore Sir Quentin Blount.

On Eustace, then, fair Helen smiled,
And soon his lips her love beguiled,—
She gave him hand and heart.
Sir Quentin granting slow consent,
His stalwart sons, with kind intent,
Confirm their sister's part.

Soon bruited round the country side :
“ Sir Eustace, brave, a new made bride
 Hath won,” was quickly told.
Then darkly fell o’er Una’s brow
A vengeance cruel—soon, I trow,
 With hate her thoughts enrolled.

With serpent words, and baited breath,
She spelled for bold Sir Eustace, death,—
 She yearned for Helen’s blood ;
She led the Duke with wily words,
And roused his deadly ire towards
 The stronghold of the flood.

Then, with nine hundred warriors bold,
The Duke did Michael’s Mount enfold ;
 Three hundred archers more,
With battering-rams and fierce attack,
Soon hoped the wealthy fort to sack,—
 The fight all round was sore.

The outer gate, the bridge, the moat,
The last defence they roundly smote,—
 Each blow a Norman’s grave ;

When loudly did Sir Eustace say :

"The devil take my soul away,

If but the fort we save".

Then leaping up the wardour stair,

Athwart the landing, grimly there

Behold a spectre stood :—

"Now list, Sir Eustace, thou shalt win"

(His words fell with the fiendish grin

Of devil's brotherhood),—

"Then I thy soul shall take, but thou

Shalt make the choice I offer now,—

Thy word shall bind thy fate.

If thou shouldst win, thy comrades all

Before thee shall in battle fall,—

No foe shall pass the gate.

"But if thou wouldst thy comrades save,

The conqu'ring blow shall ope thy grave,—

And winning thou shalt die."

"Then take my life," Sir Eustace cried ;

"Ten thousand times would I have died,

Than they my life should buy."

Brave words and true,—'twas fine to see
The turmoil fight and battery,—

But right in front was seen,
A gaunt black knight, in armour dight,
Who led them on in prosperous fight
(A cursed knight I ween).

Down went the Norman host and swift,
Right hard the blows, and short the shrift,

They fled Saint Michael's Fane.
Sir Eustace right in front pursued,
When sudden felt a lassitude,—
It was the fatal bane.

"Saint Michael, save me ere I die,"
Was then Sir Eustace heard to cry.

Up came the black armed knight,
And stretching forth a fiery hand
(His feet cleft hoof-marks in the sand),
He seized him in his plight.

When, lo ! a ray of lightning gleamed,
Full cross-wise on that awful fiend ;
And from the heavens above

Were heard these words : “ *Sir Eustace, thou
Repentest thine unholy vow,—
Go live in peace and love*”.

The day was theirs, the Duke had fled,
A requiem sung for those that bled,
Who for their cause had died :
And Quentin to Sir Eustace gave
An island home across the “grève,”
One hundred marks beside.

This island, called ‘The Fortunate,’
Though rocky, wild and desolate,
A stronghold in the sea ;
With tides and quicksands changing round,—
’Twas called by some unholy ground,
Such blank sterility.

There, then, did Eustace take his bride,—
Far safer ’mid the flowing tide,
With deadly sands between
His new built tower, with wall and well,
And distant shores ; he safe might dwell
With Helen’s love serene.

But dark despair filled Una's breast,
When back the vanquished warriors prest ;
 Since force had failed, she swore
That stratagem should win the day,—
Her artful mind soon brought to play
 The vengeful hate she bore.

For, like a sleuth-hound seeking blood,
She hunted wide o'er field and flood,
 With secret agents plied ;
And soon within their peaceful isle,
Where Eustace did his love beguile
 With Helen, they descried.

Then deeply laid her hateful scheme,
Where blood and torture reigned supreme,
 Her plans with stealthy skill.
One stormy night, lest ought should fail,
Herself led forty coats of mail,
 And seized that island hill.

She seized fair Helen, Eustace' bride,
And bound her trembling to his side,—
 Then with exulting yell,

She stabbed her 'neath her husband's eyes,
 And cast them both with hellish cries—
 Alive ! into the well.

Then rose those darksome words of woe :
*"Thyself shalt die with awful throe,
 Nor help come from above ;
 The earth shall suck thy deadly heart,
 Whilst we in peace no more shall part,
 But bear for aye true love".*

Scarce forth from off that cursed strand
 Did Una step towards the sand,
 When on, with booming roar,
 The tide rushed in with madd'ning sweep,—
 The quicksands opening wide and deep,
 Engulphed her o'er and o'er.

And thus did infidelity
 Her sated passions falsify,—
 She died accursedly.
 Those two shall dwell in endless rest,
 Reclining on each other's breast,
 In spite of villany.

So cursed the spot, none there may stay,
Though countless ages still shall pay
 Their tribute to the brave.
No place so marked with dread and doom
As Tombélène, fair Helen's tomb,
 And bold Sir Eustace' grave.



“LA PORTE MALHEUREUSE.”

A LEGEND OF NORMANDY.

"LA PORTE MALHEUREUSE."

A LEGEND OF NORMANDY.

In the neighbourhood of Avranches in the Manche, Normandy, there is an exquisite spot called the Nafree wood, and which tradition marks as the place whereon was fought, in olden times, so fierce a fight that it is said all the combatants on both sides were slain; and that in consequence of the bitter wailing and weeping of the widows and orphans who went thither to mourn their loss, the place was called the Navree or Nafree, which signifies "heartbreaking," and this name has ever since been retained.

Close by to this spot there is an ancient doorway called the "Porte Malheureuse," and which is more fully described in the following legend.

"LA PORTE MALHEUREUSE."

THUS runs the ancient legend,—and, forsooth,
More strange than fiction oft will prove the truth,—
The wond'rous fate that may true hearts divide,
How love and hatred flourish side by side.

In days of yore, when doughty deeds were told,
When fights were sore and Norman Knights were bold ;
When plighted word was kept as honour bright,
And love was vaunted as a maiden's right—
There lived two stalwart sons of brave renown,
Their father's heirs, the Lord of Ducy's town,
Who, dying, left young Harold Lord of Manche,
And eke to him his Lordship of Avranches.
His youngest son received the Nafree Tower,
His mother's scanty fortune, Raymond's dower,
The Nafree lands that mark the mournful site—
Heartbreaking mem'ry of an ancient fight.

Now like some sainted worship from above,
For Raymond deep and true was Harold's love ;
For Harold, Raymond's true love nigh outvied—
For each one's love the other would have died.
Each brother lived and for the other thought,
And scarce for company their neighbours sought ;—
Thus, then, they twain from youth to manhood grew,
And swiftly childhood's golden hours flew.

Now hapt that Harold to some tournament
(Without young Raymond) as a Squire went,
And hoping joyfully in joust and din
Good luck might lead him then his spurs to win.
So Harold fought, and conqu'ring with the lance,
Obtained renown throughout the land of France ;
Right valiantly he won the sought-for prize,
Receiving Knighthood under Beauty's eyes.

Meantime young Raymond stayed and dreamed at home,
Nor from his learning ever sought to roam ;
For in his books was Raymond's sole delight—
'Till evening reading from the dawn of light.
At times his steps would wander, as the sun
In golden splendour told that day was done,
His dreamy eyes would seek the distant strand—
Saint Michael's Mount or stern Pontorson's land.
More often lately had his footsteps strayed,
And his return seemed longer now delayed ;
Oft turned his thoughts, when deep in learning wrapt,—
For Love at erudition's portal tapt.

One day at eventide,—'twas summer-time,
When balmy breezes, with a scent sublime,
Came stealing gently, like a spirit-dream,
Soft wafted on the sun's last glowing beam,—
Full thoughtful, Raymond gazing t'ward the sea,
His eyes beheld what he had wished could be :
He saw the rising tide round Michael's Mount
Filled full of faces, more than man could count.
They seemed to look toward the topmost stone ;
And then he looked, and there beheld a throne :
Around was writ, " This is the chosen place
For him whom Wisdom doth in honour grace".
He saw a stately maid with golden hair,
And in her hand a laurel crown was there ;
And then she pointed to the regal throne,
And in these words she spoke with silver tone :—
" Full wise the head on whom this crown shall rest—
His works shall prosper and his name be blest ;
His happiness on earth will last so long,
As seeking right he turns away from wrong ;
But woe and sorrow fall if he beside
 love of Wisdom seeks another bride."

And then he saw her crown a manly form—
And from the sea of faces rose a storm
Of loud "Hurrahs,"—and lo ! the face is shown
Beneath the crown of glory,—'tis his own !

The dream is past, the pageant and the crown,
The stars are shining, and the sun is down,—
And Raymond, sparkling with ambitious fire,
Then swares that Wisdom is his heart's desire ;
He swares no earthly feeling shall induce
His book-won heart with love to make a truce.
While yet he swares in learning to rejoice,
Soft rising comes a distant silv'ry voice,—
It seems to sing upon the eventide,
"The Prince of Wisdom seeks another bride".
He hears that voice, how tender, sweet and low,—
"Is this another dream ?" fain would he know ;
Then quickly making t'ward the fairy sound,
One fence he clears it with a single bound,—
His footstep slips, and lo ! unwitting, he
Before a lovely maid falls on one knee !

How quickly fly the ardent words of youth,
When eyes have met and love found out the truth,—
The oaths at Wisdom's shrine are shed in vain,
For love's sweet troths are plighted 'twixt them twain.
And every e'en they rove in endless love—
The owl of Wisdom and love's tender dove ;
Thus Adria's heart by Raymond soon is won—
Love's hours like minutes die ere scarce begun.
So softly fly for Raymond Adria's sighs,
Like echos wafted from love's Paradise ;
Nor wots she Raymond, as her lover won,
Holds but the portion of a younger son.

One day in rapture 'neath the sunset skies,
Sat Raymond, gazing in her sweet blue eyes,—
And coyly blushing, she would softly greet
The loving glance she scarcely dared to meet.
While thus entranced, forgetting all around,
Upon their ears there fell a distant sound—
A sound, which gath'ring strength, it louder grew—
And soon a band of horsemen nearer drew.

"My brother surely comes," young Raymond cries,
And to receive Sir Harold quickly flies ;—
The brothers meeting, fondly interlace
Their arms in loving welcome long embrace.
Then passing through the low-built archway there,
For great festivity they all prepare ;
They bid the neighbours round their board to grace—
Behold ! among the rest fair Adria's face.
The feast is o'er,—some brother knight will tell
How great the deeds Sir Harold's arms befell ;
Right modestly he bore their words the while,
Their hearty plaudits and their Ladies' smile ;
Then nobly bowing to their manly praise,
He first beheld the lovely Adria's gaze.

How shall be told what thing is meant by love ?
The iron gauntlet or the velvet glove ;
Nor one nor other can its power dispel,
Nor is there ought that can its end foretell.
Behold Sir Harold now, whom nought could daunt,
No hardship trouble, whom no word could taunt,—

Behold him coy as any fluttered dove,
Beneath the subtle influence of love.
Now soon doth Adria learn his great renown,
His deeds of valour and his laurel crown ;
And then her changeful heart to Harold turned,
Although her true first-love for Raymond burned.
But, woman-like,—at least like Eve of old,
She chose the fruit that glittered most like gold ;
Though Raymond's love still kept her heart on fire,
Bold Harold's wealth most tempted her desire.
Thus artfully she watched their every move,
And smiling hid from each the other's love.

Now still 'tis true, that if with fire you play,
With fingers burned you'll live to rue the day ;
And so it hapt that Adria's love of gain
So roused her passion that she loved them twain.
Nor could she from her trammels dispossess
One or the other, nor her loves confess ;
And thus those two, unknowing each to each,
From Adria's lips an answer did beseech.

To each she said, "I cannot answer nay,"
And each one said, "Her answer then is yea";
And then returning from their Lady's bower,
They met beneath the gateway of the Tower;
And in one breath both told his happy tale—
Sir Harold frowned and Raymond's lips turned pale.
And like the pause before the coming storm,
When lightning seems all nature to deform,—
So standing there, within that sullen gate,
Those brothers glared with fierce and sudden hate,—
And, quick as thought, they rushed with daggers drawn,
And fought like Demons, although brothers born.
Oh! woman, woman! is it aye thy fate
To rouse such passions death must expiate?

Behold now Adria, t'wards the fall of day,
Grown anxious since both lovers staid away,
Bethought her somehow all was scarcely right;
With sudden fear, before the shades of night
Began to fall, and at that lonely hour
She swiftly started for the Nafree Tower.

She sped along,—in thought she swifter flew,—
She pictured evil as it darker grew ;
And when she reached the silent gate, the skies
Lit up two ghastly faces 'neath her eyes.
There lay two brothers stabbed, whose fleeting breath
Each drew in hateful struggle unto death.
No word she spoke, but stooping down, her lips
Touch each one's forehead,—then a poignard dips
In each one's blood, and raising it on high,
She plunges it, without a single cry,
Deep in her heart,—and falls, with bleeding breast,
Across the forms her loving lips had pressed.

This entry dark, whoe'er at e'en shall cross,
Will hear the sighs of Adria's remorse ;
On him will fall, whoe'er this gate shall use,
The fatal curse of the "Porte Malheureuse".

“CHANT OISEAU.”

A LEGEND OF BRITTANY.

“CHANT OISEAU.”

A LEGEND OF BRITTANY.

A MYSTERY of mysteries,
A tale that makes one creep—
All filled with curious histories,
Like waters still and deep,—
A tale of ancient wonder, grim
With spectres gaunt and gray,
When burning lights turn blue and dim,
And fly at dawn of day :
Such are the tales which legends tell,
To scare the minds of youth ;
And safely buried in her well,
They leave the ghost of truth.

But I'll not tell the wond'rous things
That fiction holds to view,—
The hist'ry that my story sings
Less sad if 'twere less true.

There is within the land of France
A lovely winding stream,—
It flows through Brittany, the Rance
In beauty reigns supreme.
Now gleams her splendour in the sun,
All bright with ripp'ling sheen,
Then turning silently, will run
Deep woody banks between.
Now breaking, bubbling merrily,
She skips her course along ;
Now still and deep, she murkily
Will creep the reeds among.
One bend there was beneath the bank,
Where hung a gloomy wood,
Where rushes grew and reeds were rank,
A lonesome dwelling stood.

It faced the stream on every side,
Save one connecting ridge ;
The flowing waters deep and wide
Around with moat and bridge.
The moss-grown walls were standing there,
And marked not long ago,
A lofty window blank and bare,
Still known as "Chant Oiseau".

Three hundred years or more have past
Since first was built the Tower,
By stern Sir Richard, who, when asked,
Said "'Tis my lady's bower".
Now be it known to all who list,
A noble knight and bold
Was Richard Beaumanoir, I wist,
Of lineage brave and old.
He wooed and won, to charm his life,
The beauteous Ermyntrude ;
Right fond of him his loving wife,
True, virtuous and good.

Her mind well filled with learned lore—
She read nigh every book—
Of household means had ample store,
Rare dishes she would cook.
She knew the stars, the birds, the trees,
Knew every creeping thing ;
But when she most desired to please,
She'd tune her lute and sing.

Now Ermyntrude was bright and gay—
She loved with grace to dance—
Nor lonely would she sit alway,
Though Richard looked askance.
For ne'er would three-score mark again
His life with summer's cheers,
While Ermyntrude, betwixt them twain,
Marked nearly thirty years.
And though she loved Sir Richard well,
She something wanting felt—
For she was young, and who can tell ?
She oft in tears would melt.

One day Sir Richard, with a sigh,
Said, "Love, I wish to see
Some distant lands before I die
Which I would leave to thee.
Now pray, at home in safety stay,
For you can read and learn ;
While three short weeks must pass away
Again ere I return."
Though in his heart a jealous thought
Would lurk, for stern was he ;
And well he knew his lady sought
To kill her "trist ennui".

Now chanced it that as Richard rode
From out the castle gate,
His wife he left in doleful mood
(Though old, he loved his mate)—
He chanced, I say, while riding forth
(There had been long delay),
To hear sweet sounds of joy and mirth,
And merry roundelay.

Then frowning deep beneath his crest,
He spurred his horse and sped :
"Three days, and not three weeks, if pressed,
Will do my work," he said.

Meanwhile that morn, fair Ermytrude
Had wept a sweet "good-bye" ;
Her look resigned beatitude,
While tears welled from each eye.
But when some hours had passed away,
She called her maidens three :
"Sir Richard's gone," she cried ; "to play—
Let's dance right merrily".
They clapped their hands and skipped around—
Their lady's lute they bring,
Nor hear their lord's departing sound—
So joyfully they sing.

While scarce the moat and bridge is passed,
The Knight was heard to say—
While o'er the Tower black looks he cast—
"Aye, *Chant Oiseau, chantez*".

When cat's away the mice will play—
 So runs the olden saw ;
Then hapt it that those ladies gay
 Made liberty their law.
The Lady Ermyntrude decreed :
 " That each should tempt her fate,
And each one hour (or more if need)
 Should seek some youthful mate ;
That each, when three bright days were o'er,
 Should meet at eventide,
And each her tale of love outpour—
 How each for love had sighed ".
Away they went, those maidens three,
 As though their choice were made—
Less coy than maidens aye should be--
 But who of Love's afraid ?

Now Ermyntrude alone was left,
 As oft before had been ;
Her voice the air of evening cleft—
 She sang sweet words, I ween.

And while their sounds scarce died away,
 An echo seemed to grow,
And, soft, in manly tones to say :
 "*Chantez toujours, Oiseau*".
And in the shades of evening, swift
 A silken cord she took,
And fixed it in the window rift,
 With smiles and tender look.
And lo ! almost as swift as thought,
 A handsome youth was nigh—
And burning lips sweet kisses sought,
 Which window bars defy.
And then with file and iron rasp,
 They sought the bars to break ;
The third day but one single hasp
 Alone was left to take.
Young Hubert worked with might and main,
 While Ermytrude within,
Sweet singing, eased her lover's pain—
 Nor thought that love was sin.
The filing now rings lighter, till
 The last grim hold gives way ;

And Hubert strides the window-sill,—
True love has won the day.
One step towards her darling love,
To her, one yearning bound,—
When 'twixt then comes an iron glove !
She falls upon the ground.
Sir Richard, standing, fierce and black,
Glares on the fated pair ;
In Hubert's heart his rage will slack—
He slays his rival there.
He hangs him by the silken rope,
From out that window sill,
And waiting till her eyes shall ope,
He proves his cruel skill ;—
For then he drags her to the air—
She on the ground is flung—
While, grasping firm her flowing hair,
He cuts from her—her tongue.

Sir Richard locks the castle gate,
He turns his friends away ;

No soul is left, save his sad mate,
Who ne'er a word can say.

For three long days she sits alone,
While he sits down below ;
She nought can do but weep and moan—
While he cries, “*Chant Oiseau*”.

One evening still, he sits below,
When crying as of yore,
His cursed hateful “*Chant Oiseau*”—
Behold she moans no more.
He, starting up the truth to gain,
Beneath the window stops—
When down the corpse which he had slain
Upon his shoulder drops ;
And to his heart the blade, which still
In Hubert's breast was found,
Fell headlong from the window-sill,
And pierced him to the ground.

Long years have passed,—the folks they say,
 Whene'er the wind will blow,
Her tuneful voice around will play,
 And echo "Chant Oiseau".

AGES AGO.

AN OLDEN TALE.

AGES AGO.

AN OLDEN TALE.

'Tis forty years ago since first
I walked beside the Thames—
 Away down Surrey Street,
And thence below the Temple-hurst,
On to the lane that hems
 The outlet of the Fleet.

On where across the sombre stream
 There spans a stone-wrought bridge,
 With arches bold and grand ;
Nigh to a house with oaken beam,
 Whose gabled hips and ridge
 Against the buttress stand.

Under an ancient sacred Tower,
Which casts athwart the way
The finger-mark of time ;
Hard by an arch, a nestling bower
Hides from the light of day
Its coat of soot-bound rime.

And oftentimes I've wandered there,
No other soul was nigh,
Save one, a gray old man ;
And oftentimes I've pondered there,
And heard the old man sigh—
That old man gray and wan.

His nestling arch, his books and stall,
Seemed all the world to him,
Beside an only child ;
Though wild his looks, at her foot-fall
His eyes would quickly dim,
His voice fall low and wild.

As years rolled on, he seemed to hang
More on his grandchild's aid.
She grew to womanhood ;

Brightly her voice each evening rang—
Sweet was that lovely maid—
Her mind so pure and good.

One day I strolled, as I was wont,
That river-side along.
The noon-day sun was bright ;
The very swallows seemed to hunt,
Skimming with joyous song,
Chasing the rays of light.

The gray old man sat smiling there,
Waiting his absent child,
And whistling 'neath his breath
Nor recked he ought, that foul or fair,
'Mid peaceful hours, or wild
Life's storms, we are in death

The busy scene, the thronging crowd,
Close to his quiet nook—
A passing pageant gay ;
The great and rich, the poor or proud,
Marked not his smiling look,
Nor heard his peaceful lay.

Oft glancing up, his eyes would seek
Something it fain would see,
Tripping with lively grace ;
His longing looks would plainly speak,
“Where can my Laura be,
Comes not her loving face ?”

’Twas eventide,—a larger throng
Suddenly pressed that way,
Passed by the gray old man,
Bearing a mangled corpse along.
“’Tis some unfortunate,” they say,
“Crushed by a brewer’s van.”

The old man, when he heard them tell
“’Tis but a sad mischance,”
He slowly shook his head,
Saying, “Since all is o’er, ’tis well ;
Leave to the ambulance
Care of their nameless dead”.

Oh ! what a world is this of care ;
Had but the old man, wild,
Seen in that eventime—

Seen with a glance, what corpse was there—

It was his darling child—

Dead in her beauty's prime.

Now Laura, since her mother's death,

Just seventeen years ago,

Life's battle stern had fought :

And since her childhood's earliest breath

Her grandsire's weal or woe

Had been her tend'rest thought.

And though with voice attuned to song,

Right modestly she gained

Her scanty livelihood

In public hall, no thought of wrong

E'er crossed her mind, engrained

With maxims bright and good.

And then a tender light, and kind,

First dawned within her breast ;

A young man claimed her love—

A lover bold ; her trusting mind

Soon fled to him for rest—

Like some sweet nestling dove.

And Richard, like some playful hound,
Walked proudly by her side—
Her escort by the way.
Whene'er she smiled, his heart would bound,
And, like a flowing tide,
His words fall blithe and gay.

'Twas settled soon, when each should save
Sufficient for their need,
They twain should wedded be ;
And thus the trusting maiden gave
Her faithful heart indeed—
No sorrow dreaded she.

As time wore on, her hopes deferred ;
Though true and kind always,
Still Richard's heart was low ;
And to her side he oft preferred
To lounge at game or play,
Or to some ale-haunt go.

How pained was then her gentle heart—
Alas ! this world is bad !—
'Mid poverty, though loath

(When yielding to entreaty's art,
For Richard's heart was sad),
She freed him from his troth.

Ere long a true and honest lad
Her heart and hand besought
(He knew not of her love) ;
For Fred sure occupation had,
And all he did seemed fraught
With good-will from above.

But Richard, when he knew that she
Some other man would wed,
Was seized with jealousy,—
And swore that this "should never be,"
He'd "sooner she were dead"—
So wild his phantasy.

Then straightway he to Laura went,
With smiles upon his face,
But black and dire his heart—
And said, "Dear love, for me relent ;
I've found a foreman place—
We ne'er again must part".

And then, as if his words to prove,
Said he, " This gift accept,
Which I for you have bought " ;
For in her breast her own first love
Had surely there been kept—
She nought of evil thought.

He led her then towards his place—
" To see the gift," he said
(His jealousy to mask) :
And then he flung into her face
(Mad with this passion dread)
A burning vitriol flask.

Oh ! God, she who with love had gone,
Trusting so sweet and good,
Confiding in his care—
With hope reviving, now was torn
With biting agony and blood—
Her shrieking rent the air.

The man fell ghastly to the ground—
Such is a coward's heart—
His recreant hand had shed

His own false blood ;—with one wild bound
She felt the awful smart
In madd'ning pain—and fled.

And dashing out into the street
(Sad was her woeful yell ;
Damned was that dastard man),
And with no power to guide her feet,
Down in the roadway fell—
Crushed by a brewer's van.

Oh, peace ! and let these mem'ries mark
That fair child passed away—
Leaving life's paths untrod,
Safe from all fear of passions dark—
Gone to eternal day—
Claimed by the hand of God.

Again along the river bank,
Down by the water-side,
I strolled ; the stall was bare—
The archway standing lone and dank,
Frowned o'er the ebbing tide—
No gray old man was there.

THE GEM OF CREATION.



THE GEM OF CREATION.

WHEN man was made by the Creator's hand
As lord of all the universe, the land,
And all that grew thereon, or walked, or breathed,
Its teeming beauteousness with joy was wreathed—
The ocean filled with life—the cheery flight
Of birds throughout the air gave sweet delight.
But man alone, most perfect work of God,
Of all creation, spurned the earth he trod.
The Mighty Father soon this grief descried,
And to His loving Son these words replied :

“ Beloved sharer of my every thought,
Behold how with much sorrow man is fraught ;

It is from want of something unconfessed,
That weighs unknowing on his manly breast."
" 'Tis so, my Father," answered then the Son ;
" For him some further work must be begun ;
The want he has by you full well is known—
'Tis not man's nature thus to live alone."
These words rejoiced the unexpressed desire
Which filled the mind of the Almighty Sire.

No mortal e'er may tell the thoughts divine,
Or guess the secrets of the hidden mine ;
Nor can we glance upon the earth or sea,
Without a sense of God's infinity.
What charms surround our path at every turn—
The blooming flowers and the waving fern,
The sound of music in the air, the voice
Of birds and zephyrs, make the soul rejoice ;
Rare Nature's beauty hid in ev'ry sod—
How perfect is the gen'rous hand of God.

Take all the attributes of every grace—
The ease and beauty of the greyhound's race,

The noble bearing of Newfoundland's dog,
The fierce daring of the savage hog,
The honest plodding of the yokèd ox,
The wond'rous cunning of the hunted fox,
The skilful swiftness of the gentle hare,
Parental fondness in the tiger's lair,
The mother's love which mountain eagles show,
And rooks whom mates among ten thousand know,—

Then look around at Nature,—marvel not
That God among such beauty casts our lot ;
For as the hand divine hath ordered things,
As surely to the oak the ivy clings,
As surely as the dawn will chase the night,
The rising sun shall pour his golden light,—
So surely the Almighty Will hath said :
“ Beyond all other beauties must be made,
Most perfect in our very likeness cast,
That which for grace shall never be surpassed ”.

'Twas said, and straightway all the gems of earth—
Each trait of beauty and each mark of worth—

The loveliest forms that Nature could produce,
The best of ev'rything in shape or use,
The highest type of ev'ry living thing,
Creation, of her wonders, strove to bring ;
And then Omnipotence, with smiling face,
Of each perfection took the charm and grace,—
And o'er the whole He breathed, all to combine,
And gave us—*Woman*, as a gift divine.

THE POWER OF LOVE.

AN IDYLL.



THE POWER OF LOVE.

AN IDYLL.

The "Châlume" is a local name in Greece for a reed instrument or pipe. The earliest form of this name is still found in the Hebrew language, namely, "Chalil". The classic Greek term was "Aulos" (αὐλός). It is probable that the instrument named in the Bible as "Shawm" or "Chawm" is of the same kind.

ALONE in that beautiful mountain land,
O'erhanging Arcadia's golden strand,
Reclining, a shepherd, in youthful bloom,
Wild melody breathed from his sweet châlume.

Both brilliant and clear was his bold black eye,
His smile was as frank as the open sky,
As fleet as the roe or the bounding fawn—
His face was as bright as the summer dawn.

Right well was he loved by the bleating flock
That followed his footsteps o'er wold and rock ;
The wild birds loved from his hand to feed,
The dove would to him from the greenwood speed.

The neighbouring shepherds loved him well,
They loved of his daring and deeds to tell—
“ How but for Adone, on that mountain side,
Pryale with his herd in the storm had died :

“ How once, when the fire on the burning cot,
Enveloped a child in that awful lot,
Right through those red flames, with their blasting breath,
He rescued that child from the jaws of death :

“ How once, when the waters of Stymphaleme,
O'erflowing the meadows of Lacedeme,
Came roaring right on in the deep'ning gloom,
Swept women and men to a wave-washed doom.

“ One old man was caught by that rushing tide—
His granddaughter clung to his tott'ring side—
He strove with his might that young life to save,
And sank with a smile to a wat'ry grave :

“ When out, like a deerhound, sprang young Adone,
Right into those surging waters alone ;
And soon into safety the maid he bore—
Her grandfather’s face they would see no more.”

Through all the wide borders of Arcadé,
No youth so sought after or loved as he,—
Yet nought in his heart e’er disturbed his rest—
No maiden moved aught in his manly breast.

Then Cupid, the love-god, was roused in ire ;
No mortal resisting his sacred fire
Might live to provoke (not the gods above)
The direful revenge of the God of Love.

So, blind in his rage, to Cythera’s isle
Sped Cupid, his mother’s fond help to wile.
Cried Venus, “ My darling, my own sweet boy,
Confide in your mother your hope, your joy”.

“ Alas !” sighed that rascal, “ I know not how
To cause ’neath my love-chains a youth to bow :
A shepherd is living whose perfect form
Seems bound every heart through his own to warm.

“ Oh ! mother, thou know'st how to charm the heart—
Thou taught'st me, too, something of that blest art ;
Then give me some secret, some mightier dower—
O'er love sweet revenge grant thy Cupid power.”

Then Venus, the rose-smiling Goddess of Grace,
Replied to her son, “ Oh ! best loved of my race,
Thou knowest Pandore, the loveliest maid ;
She sleeps in her bower of roses and shade.

“ Go, lift her up gently, and bear her away
To Cyllené, softly, and there let her lay ;
Thy cold-hearted shepherd then quickly there lead,
And soon his hard soul for her love-smile shall bleed.”

The Goddess of Foam had scarce closed her lips,
Ere Cupid away from her presence slips ;
And weaving, of roses and lilies fair,
A chain for Pandore as he skims the air,

Descends near her bower of roses sweet,
And bears her away from her cool retreat.
By Love's little God then a charm is slid,
A pearly blush-rose-leaf on each closed lid ;

And gently he wafts her to mount Cyllene,
There choosing a cradle of mossy green,
Where sweet wood-anemonies scent the air,
Where butterflies flit from their sun-lit lair.

There, wand'ring, Adone, where his footsteps list,
He turns in the way (for the Fates insist),
And suddenly, gazing in sweet surprise,
Pandore in her loveliness greets his eyes.

As bold as the War-god before the foe,
Nor fears he danger, come weal come woe,—
Adone, in the roseate chain of love,
Stands fluttered and coy as a wild ring-dove.

Though valiant and brave is Adone, alas !
In vain against Love will he strive to pass ;
There courses throughout every vein and pore
Consuming fire at the sight of Pandore.

Now passion o'erwhelms him where'er he goes—
Of love his heart but the bitterness knows—
The burning words on his lips will die,
And vanishing end in a love-sick sigh.

At length, all trembling, his love he declares,
Lest he should offend—the offence he dares—
How bounds his heart when she scarce replies,
“Aye love ” on her lips, “Aye love ” in her eyes.

And soon to the altar Love guides those two—
Their beauteous forms seemed their fate to woo—
Then plighting their troth 'neath the azure sky,
Their vows are received by the Gods on high.

Then over the universe seems to rise
A musical influence in the skies,—
A voice triumphant is heard above :
“ *No mortal may scoff at the power of Love* ”.

A LIVING DEATH.

A FACT IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

A LIVING DEATH.

A FACT IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

During the reign of Napoleon III. an inquiry was officially instituted into the advisability of extending the time allowed to lapse between death and burial, which in France was exceedingly short, and by many considered much too short even for decency's sake. The Archbishop of Paris at that time was, amongst many other leading and scientific men, cited before the Commission, and he gave the following evidence in favour of a less hurried inhumation.

My Lords and Gentlemen,—Before you stands

A man, who like yourselves must surely die,—
One who, could Death still issue his commands,
If really dead, in silent peace would lie.
But how so old this world, with wisdom fraught,
How endless time, how infinite the skill,

No human eye can tell when Death has sought
To rend the soul his dastard hand would kill.
No man hath shown when ends this mortal strife,
Nor proved the spirit's flight toward the sky ;
Nor told in truth when ebbs the tide of life,
When man *is* dead, or when he seems to die.
Ten thousand diff'rent proofs 'fore you are shown,
Each seeming forcible in word and truth ;
But when their test is tried, each one will own
His test was made, like innocence in youth,
But to deceive when tried before the light
Of world's experience,—beneath the breath
Of practical attempt,—their useless plight
But shows again the mystery of Death.
Then, wherefore bury in unseemly haste ?
Why tear, ere needed, from the loving eye,
The form of one beloved, too soon encased,
The mortal portion that is doomed to die ?

Now picture this, my Lords and Gentlemen :
The weeping woman o'er her husband's face ;
His soul hath fled beyond all human ken—
They bear him swift to his last resting-place.

When, lo ! this mourning wife, ere scarce the sod

Her first hath hid, a second husband weds,

Despite all decency, defies her God,—

Though vengeance follows nigh the guilty heads :

For murmurs, vaguely rising, quickly swell,

Till clamour loudly calls, “ Why did he die ?

So young and strong—all surely is not well ;

While she hath wed his friend so hastily ”.

Then rumour darkly hints, with bated breath,

“ Foul play ! ” the “ poison cup ! ” some “ curséd deed

Hath brought about so suddenly this death ” ;

And late will justice to inquire proceed.

Now damning circumstantial evidence

The wife and new-made lover intercepts ;

Nor can they quote one single fair pretence,

No exculpating word their tale excepts.

But one more proof alone doth justice need :

’Tis this, that if some herbal poison still

Be found, ’twill prove who did the damning deed—

Or prove the murderer’s desire to kill.

The test is tried—but lo ! with best intent,

The corpse no longer answers to request ;

Decay too rapidly its form hath spent—

All secrets hid for ever there will rest.

Though had the body been retained above,

Ere many days the test would have been tried ;

And poison's baneful traces soon would prove

The crime, whose secret otherwise had died.

Again, my Lords and Gentlemen, I crave

Your kind attention,—for I fain would show

How great a wrong is hidden in the grave

Of one who present law doth send below

Too soon, ere marks of death or of decay

Have shown to mortal eye some real trace

That man is once again of earthly clay,

Or that his soul hath reached another place.

Within this very Diocese of mine,

There lived in poverty and humble guise,

A village curate, who without a sign

Of worldly longing, oft betimes would rise,

And tend in mercy at the dying bed

Of some poor member of his loving flock,—

Or soothe the doubts, when by temptation led,
Some soul had scarce been saved from error's rock.
Right well was he beloved,—though young in years,
An older head seemed on his shoulders bent ;
For fasting often in this vale of tears,
With learning, had some aged features lent.
One day while yet he walked his daily round,
He sudden felt a giddy dreariness ;
And calling out, he fell upon the ground :
His heart scarce beat for very weariness,
His face so pale, his fingers long and dank,
His body rigid,—all the neighbours said,
While low they laid him on the mossy bank—
“ He breathes no longer, he is really dead ”.
And though he could not move a finger-tip,
Nor seemed to breathe, yet every single word
That fell around, the whisper of each lip,
By him in helpless agony was heard.
He heard them as in syncope he lay,
How sorr'wing for their loss, they loved him well ;
And then he knew they bore his corpse away :
Was he then dead ?—was this then Heaven or Hell ?

And then he heard his faithful hound bewail,
And moaning lay beside his prostrate form ;
And all his friends pour forth of woe their tale
O'er his cold body, though his mind was warm.
He sought, with inward yearning, oft to catch
Some sorr'wing eye, but ne'er his eye could move,—
Though ev'ry change he mentally could watch,
No sound could raise, his living brain to prove.

Ye laws of France ! now comes their deadly speed—
The shell prepared, the last look at the dead ;
For then was done—a foul, unwitting deed—
A buried corpse with still a living head !

Oh ! God, can words express that woeful hour,
The wond'rous fear in man, the want of breath ?
The living tomb, the brain's still sleeping power,
Or paint the awful agony of death ?
Yea, there he lay beneath the vaulted pile,
Entombed alive, with scarce the power to pray—
When blows resounding in that lonely aisle,
Right o'er him fell a sudden gleam of day.

Two ruffians secretly had entered there,
The clothes to steal, and ought their hands might find ;
Behold, the sudden impact of the air
Revived his body and recalled his mind.
Then rising, slowly catalepsy fled,—
His heart began to beat, and gentle breath
Gave strength and life,—the ruffians swiftly fled,
As forth he stepped from out the jaws of death.

You say I have not told this Curate's name !
“ Who suffered this sad agony ? ” you cry ;
Behold, my Lords and Gentlemen, the same
Who died alive, and lived again,—’*Twas I !*

MATER DOLOROSA.

MATER DOLOROSA.

WHAT picture is it that so clearly tells

A tale of woe, a tale of agony,—

That saddens life's dream, while the tear-drop wells

Within our eyes, upbraiding destiny?

Alas! it is the loss of one beloved—

Some darling of our daylight, of our life;

The gauntlet by whose love life's hand is gloved—

A friend, a child, relation, daughter, wife.

Thus then it hapt, one day when passing by

A village home, I chanced a crowd to see—

A knot of mourners; and I could descry

Within the house a woeful jubilee:

A widowed mother, kneeling on the ground,
Bewailing her lost child with tearful throbs
And cries, heart-breaking to all standing round—
Each word re-echoing her grief-worn sobs.

There was her little child, laid low in death—
In sleep it seemingly had passed away ;
Some infant sickness had suspended breath ;
While yet within its mother's arms it lay.

They said to her, "Now weep not for the child ;
To rouse the dead again can tears avail ?"
Then to their kindly words, in accents wild,
The mother answered with heart-rending wail:—

MISERERE.

Say ! is it now they are starting ?
Tell me not why !
Let me not see them departing—
Why did you die ?

Lo ! for this boon was I craving,
 This was my cry—
God ! that his life Thou wert saving—
 Why did you die ?

Darling, for thee I am weeping—
 Must I not cry ?
Is it for aye thou art sleeping—
 Why did you die ?

Sorrow my spirit is breaking ;
 Closed in thine eye,
Until in glory awaking—
 Why did you die ?

One longing look, then for ever,
 Darling—good-bye—
Death in this world all will sever—
 Why did you die ?

Gone is my dear one, so gently,
 Sped with a sigh ;
Pictured in peace so intently—
 Why did you die ?

Had I the wings of the ring-dove,
Soon would I fly—
Calling out sadly : “ My own love,
Why did you die ? ”

MATER MÆSTISSIMA.

Then gently lifting up from off its bed
Her little babe, she turned with accents brave :
“ Take my loved infant,” then she softly said,—
“ We all shall meet once more beyond the grave ”.

And then they placed it in its little shell ;
And bending down she tried in vain to speak—
In silence gave a mother’s last farewell—
When, lo ! the colour mounted to its cheek !

“ My child !—it lives !—see, see !—it breathes again !
It is not dead !—oh ! God, all-merciful,
My cry was heard !—my prayers were not in vain—
I thank Thee, Thou Who art all-bountiful.”

Thus on that widow peace and great content
Now fell at length, and wiped away her tears ;—
The child he grew in manly ornament,
And lived to comfort her declining years.

MATER LÆTISSIMA.



“AN INTERESTING STORY.”



“AN INTERESTING STORY.”

You ask me for “a story”; must I “tell you something,”
child?

“An interesting story,” “something weird, strange, and
wild”?

Dear me! what shall I tell you?—little darling, bright-eyed
elf!

You wish me, then, to tell you “something true about
myself”?

Well, p'raps I can remember just one little anecdote—
'Tis all I now remember of myself, that I can quote.

'Twas many years since I was young—
 'Twas years before your birth,
My darling niece—when rumours hung
 Of wars throughout the earth :
When every man to fighting took,
 Each one on glory bent ;
His native home each one forsook,
 And "for a soldier went".
So too a soldier I became,
 And joined the dashing "Reds"—
A fighting corps of gallant name,
 The "Dare-all go-aheads".
Where'er hard-fighting blows would sound,
 Throughout the old war-time,
The "Dare-all go-aheads" were found
 In every land and clime.
When first, as subaltern, I heard
 The roar of shot and shell,
While fluttered like a startled bird,
 My heart began to swell,—
And soon among the foremost rush,
 We led the hope forlorn ;

All danger caused my cheeks to flush—
For brave my heart was born.
And now the day by us was won ;
The "Dare-alls" led the van ;
Each one some gallant deed had done—
A hero every man.
And thus through many a hard-won fight,
I won reward and fame—
'Tis why, dear child, they call me knight,
Mark of an honoured name.
So, "Lina," darling, I grew old,
Through mighty fields of slain,
Nor cared I, if the fight was bold,
How great the wounds or pain.
My heart grew hardened by the strife,
Nor thought 'twas cruel fun
To brag of taking many a life
Before each fight was done.
And thus, at mess, my comrades all
My fighting deeds would tell,
And say in joke, "Although he's small,
He'd fight a fiend as well.

No deed too hard for him to try—
All fear his pluck will spurn—
For him 'tis but to do or die,
To win—or ne'er return."

One time—(my fighting days were o'er)—
We sat—('twas after mess)—
Some brother officers, a score,
Rare stories would confess.
And chatting o'er our wine, we told
The younger men how still
The "Dare-all go-aheads" were bold,
How bravely they would kill.
Such dash and courage no ill-luck
Could in this world upset ;
Our "go-ahead," the "Dare-all's" pluck
Our every tale beset.
At length one man said, "By-the-bye,
You fellows ! what d'you think—
Whilst I awake last night did lie,
A rat came out to drink !
At first he ran across my bed,
And then towards the hearth ;

Then after running round my head,
He made towards my bath :
And then he bolted—but, behold !
A dozen rats, or more,
Came out—and, if the truth be told,
There followed quite a score."

" Oh, rats !" I cried,—“ who cares for rats ?
I'll chase them in a trice,
Without the aid of stupid cats—
Who much prefer the mice.
If I but one alive can catch,
All rats shall quickly flee :
To rid them all I'll bet my watch—
So leave it all to me.”
The officers now left their wine
(Their duties to fulfil),
While I alone was left with mine,
And one companion still.
We chanced in silence then to sit—
Our thoughts seemed far away—
When, lo ! as though to rouse our wit,
A rat came out to play.

And then, as if my bet to test,
Behold ! it came to pass—
Upon the rat I dropt with zest
An empty finger-glass.
The rat was caught, and I with care
My bet to win proceed,
And carefully the rat prepare—
It was a cruel deed.
Some turpentine, some resin tar,
I smear upon his back ;
He looked as if some nigger war
Had turned his whiskers black.
I rubbed his fur with horrid stuff,
Till I no more had got ;
His tail not having quite enough,
I tied it in a knot !
And then I launched him in his hole—
He quickly scampered free ;
And soon the rats away they stole—
Not one was left—but he !
And now the bet which I had won,
To me was duly paid—

A new gold watch, for I had done
Right well what I had said.
Three days had passed, and once again,
'Twas after mess, we sat ;
My friend was there,—when slow with pain,
Came hobbling out the rat !
Then slowly to my feet he crawled,
And sadly looked at me ;
The reason why he thus had called,
Why, one could plainly see :
His piteous eye, his shrunken back,
He looked a wretched lot—
His ears were down, his ribs were black,
His tail was in a knot.
And then—the first time in my life,
Deep sorrow filled my breast ;
It pierced my heart as with a knife,
To have this rat oppressed.
I took him gently off the ground—
He let me work my will—
And then I oiled his coat around,
With food his mouth did fill.

The tar I slowly rubbed away,
I then untied the knot—
And when he frisked about in play,
I expiation got.
Then pricked he up his tiny ears,
And twinkled bright his eye—
And squeaking forth three rat-like cheers,
He seemed to say, " Good-bye ".

Then ne'er should man, for boast or pride,
Such cruelty pursue ;
For had the rat in torture died,
Nought could such wrong undo.

And so, my darling, bear in mind,
Give no dumb creature pain ;
For in your heart you'd surely find
'Twould prove a lasting bane.

THE VALE OF TIME.

THE VALE OF TIME.

THERE is a sheltered vale where Itys sings,
The favourite haunt of Iris' golden ray,
Where often dance the Fays their fairy-rings,
And swallows skim throughout the summer's day.

It is a spot where footsteps rarely fall,
The snows of Winter scarcely seem to stay ;
There sunbeams captured live for good and all,
And biting Eos will not thither stray.

This is the garden of the Queen of Light—
Each dawn of day brings each its golden bloom—
And ev'ry morning sparkles with delight,
And weeps at eve the blossoms' early doom.

There first the snow-flakes falling seem to die,
And melt into the ground, to reappear
As tender snow-drops, maiden-like and shy,
Whose drooping glance seems always to endear.

What charm is greater than the wakening Spring,
The early blossoms and the echoing song
Of love-sweet ditties, which so blithely ring
From merle and throstle as we stroll along ?

Then next, in this wild-flowers' "Vaudevil,"
I'll sing the month of Mars and Boreas,
The God of War's gold crest the daffodil,
Which wreathes their stormy vows at Candlemass.

These vows they swear, because they twain had tried
Each other's loves by stealth to countermine ;
Each woo'd Dame Nature for his budding bride,
Suborning crocus-eyed Saint Valentine.

And thus in tears, to expiate their sins,
Will April wash them all with showers away ;
And then to comfort them, the Dame begins
To deck their canopies with blooming May.

Oh, perfect May, thou month of loveliness,
Of Nature's dreamy hours, of bursting joy,
Thy smiling crown of maiden comeliness
Shall win thee lovers' sighs and kisses coy.

Thy dainty feet the violet shall press,
Thy couch the primrose and the bluebell gay,
While asphodel shall deck thy flow'ry dress,
And lilies kiss thee on thine opening day.

Then rarer grows the beauty of the dale
When rosy June dons Summer's wreath of green,
And hand in hand July trips up the vale,
And scatters cowslips for the fairy-queen.

Those blooming handmaids of the month of May,
Who scent with amaranth the ambient air,
Dance round anemonies the livelong day,
With garlands streaming through their golden hair.

They hide their sunbeams in the wood-bell's whorle,
And hunt round love-lilies the heavenly boy ;
They trill with laughter at Proserpine's call,
And cheer the wand'rer with their traveller's-joy.

But while they thus disport their glowing charms,
Comes ruddy August, youthful, brave, and strong,
And seizing both within his radiant arms,
Declares their beauties but to him belong.

Behold the power of Love's all conqu'ring sway,
How Nature's laws must win the passing hours ;
These maiden brides their lord with love obey,
And fill the glen with August-laden flowers.

There blooms the foxglove and the shepherd's-eye,
The ragged-robin and wild hour-glass,
Which pixies turn to mark where rainbows die,
And plant the spot with Iris' quaking grass.

But other charms the smiles of August bring—
The mell'wing peaches and the rip'ning pear,
The purple vines that with their tendrils cling,
And challenge sunbeams with their tempting ware.

Then August dies in fickle love too soon,
Prolific most of all the summer days—
He dies in sight of his new love, the Moon,
Whose splendour kills him with her love-sick rays.

Bright-clothed with poppies, like some dainty lord,
Next comes September, August's eldest-born ;
Young men and maidens dancing on the sward,
Bear home the harvest of the golden corn,—

And laughing, usher in with joyous cry
October's glories, clothed in Autumn gold,
His wond'rous painting on the sunset sky,
His tints depicted with a skill untold.

Grouse-laden heather on the purple down,
The russet woodland and the roan-leaf trees,
The forest bracken with its wond'rous brown,
The falling leaflets 'neath the waving breeze.

No tender memory can sweeter be
To man, who loves the great Creator's face,
Than all the richness over land and sea,
Which God in Autumn loves with gold to trace.

Then next to "chill October," with its ban
Of silent mists and frosts, which kill the bloom
Of Summer, comes November, wild and wan,
Whose length'ning nights remind us of the tomb.

And of those ling'ring days when life is done,
December's icy fingers point the way
Which ev'ry man must travel all alone,
To that great land beyond the gloam of day.

Then well may mortals, when their days are few,
Remember how for them a better clime
Hath God prepared, when each hath travelled through
Their last short journey in the Vale of Time.

THE LESSON OF THE FISHES.

THE LESSON OF THE FISHES.

I WANDERED by the stream, for discontent
Had filled my weary heart, and grief had lent
A horror to the darkling pool below ;
I cursed, in anguish, my long life of woe.

I blamed the Giver of the very air—
Anathemas I breathed in wild despair ;
I mourned my losses with an inward groan,
And lamentations with repeated moan.

“I was not born to work for daily bread ;
As well would I, without life's wealth, be dead.
What good can bring endurance of a life
Which fate has shackled with a scolding wife ?

“How can I live? oh! rather I will die,
And 'neath these waters from life's troubles fly”—
When, lo! three Fishes to the surface came,
And thus did one, to my surprise, exclaim :—

“Withhold and murmur not, thou son of man,
Nor scorn the blessings which immortal can
Make erring men, when humbly through their lives,
With minds contented, bear their mortal gyves.

“Nigh to that very spot whereon you stand,
There came a woman, poor and old, her hand
Clutched fast a single wretched crust of bread,
And all her friends seemed numbered with the dead.

“She stood as now you stand,—the sedgy grass
Scarce bent to let her tott'ring footsteps pass,—
And stooping down towards the river's brink,
She soaked her crust, and then essayed to drink.

“‘Alas!’ she cried, ‘my life is hard to bear;
No longer will I live in blank despair.’
She spoke, and then she passed beneath the wave,
To that great unknown land beyond the grave.

“ Her baneful pride had brought her to this end—
She scorned the succour of the thoughtful friend ;
She ended life in penury and woe,
Consumed with arrogance at all below.

“ While yet she lived, lo ! help was nigh the door—
Her son returning, ere her life was o’er,
Good news and comfort to her cottage came,
And sorrowing children sought the absent dame.

“ And ere she died her meed of woe was past—
She’d ne’er again with want be overcast ;
But still refusing aid from squire or clod,
Thus died, despite the helping hand of God.”

Then up and spake the second Fish to me :
“ Oh, sir, the shining waters that you see,
Reflected erst a youth, whose golden brow
Seemed crowned in beauty with a heavenly glow.

“ He stood beside the ever-flowing stream,
Like some immortal wafted in a dream ;
And, though he spoke not, looking wild and wan,
Thus in his thoughts his sad reflections ran :—

“ ‘Oh ! why, my darling, art thou lost to me—
The very centre of my destiny ;
My heart thus cast into a deep abyss,
Recalls in mem’ry but thy parting kiss.

“ ‘Thou damnèd angel of the nether shore,
Why hast thou slain the loved one I adore ?
Since thou didst steal from me my only love,
Eternal curses blast thee from above.’

“ Down to the water’s edge he slowly crept—
He placed his hands before his face and wept —
Then, springing forth into the surging tide,
He sought in death to join his gentle bride.

“ But, lo ! had he but stayed his final doom,
Behold what joy had ended all his gloom—
For though he thought her dead, she ne’er had died,
But for her rash, lost love long lived and sighed.”

To me the last, then, of the Fishes three
Took up his parable with dignity,
Apostrophizing with reproving fin
The crime of suicide, as cowards’ sin.

“ Behold how sad a thing it is to see
The love of gold engross humanity ;
How oft 'twill break the sacred chains of trust,
And wreck the future with its greedy lust.

“ 'Twill mar simplicity in childhood's hour,
'Twill rob all beauty from the summer flower,
'Twill chase each happiness from manhood's years,
Oft fill his after life with empty tears.

“ Insatiable as death, a yearning fret,
Inducing man his Maker to forget ;
Soon kills all thoughts beneath its iron rod,
Till, miser-like, man's gold becomes his god.

“ One eve a footstep came toward the stream,
With horrid cursings and a ghastly scream—
A weird man, with long and whitening hair,
Who wildly cried and beat the empty air :

“ ‘ Of gold I've lost of pounds a goodly score—
Ne'er have I suffered such a loss before ;
Lo ! I am ruined, and my treasure gone,
Nor can I live my beggary to mourn.’

“ And then he leapt in, with a mournful yell,
Which echoed hoarsely o’er the woodland dell,
And sank, while struggling to regain the shore—
His pockets held a thousand pounds or more.”

The Fishes three then vanished from my sight,
And left me wiser in the dawning light—
For discontent was banished from my mind,
And hope at length cast suicide behind.

THE WILLOW.

A REMINISCENCE.

THE WILLOW.

A REMINISCENCE.

O'ERHANGING and reflecting in the stream,
Years rolling on, alone I live to dream
How beautiful is all within my glance—
The shimmer of the wavelets as they dance
Beneath the sunshine, with its golden light,
Which casts my shadow for the sole delight
Of tender lovers who will seek my shade,
And oft with vows my loneliness invade.

My outstretched limbs the rippling waters lave,
I dip my weeping branches in the wave—
A Willow, sighing in the gentle breeze,
I watch the waters flowing t'ward the seas.

How sweet the scented zephyrs waft across
Those meadows, where the lads their harvest toss ;
The smell of hay seems sweeter as the sun,
In purple beauty, tells the day is done.

The evening dew-drops clinging to my leaves,
Like tears on lashes that some sorrow grieves,
While sadness lasts, long through the darkening night,
Will sparkle brightly in the morning light.
Alas ! that all this happiness must cease—
That all will end, this restfulness and peace ;
How sad the thought that all must die ;—the past
Through death will gain in glory life at last.

Though I have lived a century or more,
Though riv'n by light'ning to my centre core,
Though split in twain, and lolling o'er the stream,
Though old in looks, am younger than I seem—
I bear the brunt of wintry winds, and smile
When storms their fancies round my limbs beguile ; -
And hard'ning up my bark, when leaves are lost,
Resist all weathers and defy the frost.

How swift the balmy influence of Spring
Dispels the rigour of the icy king,
Who gently yielding to her budding charms,
Soon warms to life and melts into her arms.
Saint Valentine stands sponsor to their loves—
The seasons pairing like the cooing doves ;
And thus the child of March and April gay
Is born to bless us with the month of May.

I too with bloom am bursting, and, behold !
I deck Palm-Sunday with my plumes of gold ;
And quick'ning Nature 'neath the sun-god's ray,
Soon clothes my glory with a green display.
How proud I feel when first my leaves I don,
As if for me the Summer sunlight shone ;
As if for me young Nature in her grace,
Had deigned to smile upon my rugged face.

Then August comes, the beaming month of love,
And warmer pours the sunshine from above ;
When 'neath my leaves they rest with tender sighs—
True-loves I shelter from all prying eyes.

How quickly fly those golden days of youth,
When thoughts are worthy, when each word is truth ;
How oft in life such happiness creeps in,
And all seems ended ere it scarce begin.

Nigh me one day there passed a maiden fair—
Her face was lovely, and her rippling hair
Fell round her shoulders like a golden tide ;
A noble youth stepped coyly by her side.
No words in converse could their loves enhance,
Their hearts seemed mingled in each speaking glance ;
His tender soul reflected in her eyes,
Their thoughts were echoed in a hundred sighs.

Next time I saw her, with her hair of gold,
Her face was lighted with the smile of old ;
Three bright-eyed children clustered at her knee—
Their golden hair seemed like a dream to me.
A little lad, whose laughing cherub grace
Recalled to memory a manlier face—
That noble youth who once a lover coy,
Now stood beside the mother of his boy.

I saw her once again, her whit'ning hair
Still showed some traces that the gold was there ;
Her face was saddened, and I thought with pain
I ne'er should hear that ringing laugh again.
Ah ! did I dream ?—how different was that sigh—
A scalding tear falls trembling from her eye ;
Old fool am I, that tear has made me groan,
For death has left her in the world—alone.

MISCELLANEOUS.

A PRELUDE.

WHEN Spring unveils herself to view,
Her buds are young and green ;
And blushing each dawn anew
With tender light is seen.
The throstle, when she rears her young,
Herself will blithely sing ;
Her little ones, thus early strung,
With tuneful notes will ring.

But how so green the Spring may prove,
How dim the dawning light,
Or low the firstling's notes of love,
Let these portray my plight.
Thus may these early songs attune
Themselves in Orpheus' vein,
And blossoming like flowers in June,
Your sympathy obtain.

CHATEAUBRIAND'S TOMB.

SONNET ON VISITING THE LONELY TOMB OF FRANÇOIS RENÈ, VISCOUNT
DE CHATEAUBRIAND, ON THE ISLAND OF GRAND BEY, NEAR ST.
MALO, IN BRITTANY.

Chateaubriand was born at St. Malo on 4th Sept., 1768, and died 4th July, 1848; and therefore aged nearly 80 years. He was the youngest of ten children, and was always a diminutive man, although he became great as Prime Minister of France, and the most celebrated writer of the Napoleonic era. His descriptions of Nature's wild scenes, virgin forests, and primitive life in America, are vividly described in his "Renè" and "Atala".

A SONNET.

O SACRED Isle, great Chateaubriand's rest,
There dost thou lie, spirit of minstrelsy,
Mourned by the wailing murmur of the sea,
Enshrined in glinting crimson of the west.
There let thy name in all its purity
Sojourn for aye, in that lone sea-girt isle ;
There as a child of France, a nation's smile
Shall honour thee through all eternity.
Dost thou still love those wild waves' broken spell ?
The vast expanse, the ocean's endless charm ?
Doth not thy poet-soul, again grown warm,
Turn to those beauties which thou lovedst so well ?
There doth thy lyre still haunt with echoing tone,
There breaking waves their whispering praises moan.

BIRTHDAY SONNET.

(WRITTEN AS A DEDICATION IN A "PRINCESS BEATRICE"
BIRTHDAY BOOK.)

Is it for gifts like these the world was made ?
 To measure time and chronicle men's years,
 To tell of births or children which man rears,
Or mark how soon all earthly matters fade ?
Are we not born enlightened words to speak,
 And work good actions, so their blessing flings
 Bright mem'ries round our lives like fairy-rings,
And prove us worthier great ends to seek ?
Such goals to win, sweet lady, thou wast born,
 To foster all that's beautiful and good,
 To lead in faith divinely understood,
Till golden glories shall thy brows adorn ;
 Heed then with honour, till the end appears,
 Each loving birthday, and recurrent years.

“*ΕΠΕΑ ΠΤΕΡΑΟΝΤΑ.*”

WINGED WORDS.

WORDS ! powerful, incomparable, teeming words !
 Which wildly, madly rushing through the sieve of thought,
 Give to man's every deed some great reality,
 Or tear the veil of mem'ry from the conscious heart ;
 For words, once flying forth, escape all mortal ken,
 And sow their blighting woe, or waft their blessèd spell,
 Heedless of all the thoughtless speaker's wish to stay
 Their winged vengeance from the head of innocence,
 From resting on the spotless hearth of some proud name,
 Or soiling, swift, relentless, some fair virgin soul,
 Or killing with some dark-flown whisper, honour's pride,
 Or wounding virtue with suspicion's poison praise ;
 Were all such goodness slain,
 Would ever one sped word
 Ere pay the requiem of silence to the dead ?

A SUPPLICATION TO APHRODITE.

(ΑΦΡΟΔΙΤΗ 'ΑΝΑΔΥΟΜΕΝΗ.)

BORN of the foam rising out of the sea,
 Centre of loveliness, hearken to me !
 Breathing my vows o'er thy limitless wave,
 Grant, Aphrodite, the prayer that I crave.
 Wild is the wish that my heart would obtain,
 Scarce dare I utter—words seem all in vain ;
 Wouldst thou but hide in a daffodil whorl,
 Into thy calix my wishes would fall ;
 Wouldst thou but flit on the wings of the wind,
 Breathed in the air all my vows you would find ;
 Wouldst thou but dance round my thoughts in the sky,
 Soon would my heart to thee rapidly fly.

Ah ! but I long with a yearning so great,
Searching for happiness, scarce can I wait ;
Seeking that shore where all mortals are due,
Once, if in love, they prove tender and true.
This that I ask for, is't ought thou canst guess ?
Something to live for, 'tis something to bless,
Something to die for, to suffer in pain,
All the world lost, 'twere the greatest of gain.
Scarce can I tell of the favour I seek,
Fain would I whisper the words I must speak.
Hear, Aphrodite, thou queen of the sea,
This is the guerdon demanded of thee—
Grant me this boon ere thy footsteps depart :
Give me the whole of my ladylove's heart !

SLEEPING BEAUTY.

(A SONNET WRITTEN THROUGHOUT IN UNISON OF
RHYME.)

PEACEFULLY, dreamily, gently repose,
Gracefully resting, thy fairy-lids close,
Drowsily sinking, then tranquilly doze,
Balmily breathing the scent of the rose.
Over thy form a light fairy-hand sows,
Blushingly, petals to serve thee as clothes,
Wafted in dreamland each thought as it goes,
Swift a love-spell o'er thy tender heart throws.
Glorious vision, far purer than snows,
Fairer than any fair lily that grows,
Singing thy lullaby, soft the wind blows,
Whispering dreams which thy loving heart knows.
Tenderly greeting my heart as it flows,
Seeking thy love, love eternally glows.

TO THE ABSENT ONE.

I LOVE thee !—oh ! I love thee !—’tis my heart that yearns
for thee,

My life-blood throbs for thee alone, the very soul of me ;
The dancing fires that quicken every impulse of my brain,
Are sparks that flash with mem’ries of the love I seek in
vain.

I see thy face before me, when I close my longing eyes,
Whene’er I open them thy form ’fore them again will rise,
As charms waft o’er the breezes for a sign of distant love,
Across the waste of waters, like the olive from the dove.
In fancy everything I grasp recalls thy magic touch,
I strain thine image to my breast, ’twill vanish from my
clutch—

I hear the music of thy voice, thy loving tones I seek,
I seem to feel the passion of thy breath upon my cheek.
Oh ! if perchance my heart could change its place and live
with thee,

Then yours I’d take, and happiness would live for aye with
me.

TO AN ABSENT FRIEND.

(SONNET WRITTEN ON A BIRTHDAY FALLING ON
CHRISTMAS-DAY.)

My birthday wish to you is "happiness,
And peaceful days returning year by year,
Around you laughing faces and good cheer,
And may prosperity your future bless".
Though far away, I would some gentle breeze
Could bear these words, and waft again to me
The manly smile, the heartfelt sympathy,
A sign of friendship o'er the distant seas.
Alas ! that every year the paths of life
Should widen further as they onward trend,
And rarer sound the footsteps of the friend,
While holy loves are lost in worldly strife.
But lo ! at hand are "tidings of great joy"—
The birthday promise of the Heavenly Boy.

SONNET TO THOSE BORN IN MAY.

How strange to mark the ebb and flow of time,
To note the changes of returning years ;
How wond'rously each season reappears—
All things subservient to a Will sublime.
'Tis thus, when once has sped the winter rime,
Beaming with hope, dispelling doubts and fears,
Pouring her gladd'ning music in our ears,
Comes joyous May, like beauty in her prime.
With teeming Nature well may those rejoice
Who win this day their birthright from above ;
May saving health of a Redemer's choice,
Upon their hearts descending like the dove,
Awaken in their souls that still small voice,
And rouse in them the purest type of love.

GOOD-WISHES TO THOSE BORN IN MAY.

As joyous Spring will chase the winter rime,
Renewing life, so Nature's youthful prime,
Through April showers, heralds summer-time.
How sweet these tears of Spring, they seem to tel',
Unsought, of teeming buds, the fairy-bell,
Rare daffodils that paint the woodland dell ;
Pale-eyed anemonies and lilies bright,
Which crown sweet May with wreaths of gay delight,
Oft claiming bluebells as her own birth-right.
On those who claim her, too, may blessings fall ;
Who born in May, with loving friends recall
Dear memories, and win goodwill from all.

LOVE'S EXCUSE.

WHEN dreamy eyes beseech, whose azure hue
Bewilders in their depths man's very soul,
Enticing all to seek their witching goal,
With glinting lights which pierce their heavenly blue,
Alluring man ; when glances bright will sue
The very honour of his heart's control,
And write thereon as in a knightly scroll,
Enciting him to tender deeds and true ;
Can ought condemn ? when thus at every turn
Are seen such traits of beauteous womanhood,
Whose liquid looks no mortal man may spurn ;
'Tis Love's excuse for true-love understood ;
Such all-entrancing fires surely burn,
And prove man's love for woman pure and good.

THE EXCUSE OF LOVE.

IF that enthralling witchery of sound,
That fairy voice which fills the echoing air,
Enchanting all with musical and rare
O'erwhelming charm, pours harmony around,
And makes the pulses of my life rebound,
Lifting my soul with wingèd angels' care,
Who seem to wile away my heart, and bear
My feet to Paradise from off the ground ;
If those endearing eyes imploring look,
With trustful thought, seem drop by drop to still
Into my soul a magic nought can brook,
Which flows right o'er me like some quick'ning rill ;
If soft looks speak out like an open book,
Then surely this is Love's all conqu'ring will ?

ἌΕΙΘΑΛΕΙΣ ΚΑΘ' ὩΡΑΣ.

THROUGH AGES EVERLASTING.

WHENE'ER I sleep, I dream of thee,
 And fancy thou mayst dream of me ;
 And fain my heart with thine would be,
 ἀειθαλεις καθ' ὥρας,
 Through ages everlasting.

Thy face afar mine eyes would sue,
 Thy lips to mine seem pure and true,
 And to mine heart thine holds the clue,
 ἀειθαλεις καθ' ὥρας,
 Through ages everlasting.

Perchance if we should meet again,
Our hearts no more should love in vain,
No more should part through joy or pain,

ἀειθαλείς καθ' ὥρας,
Through ages everlasting.

Ah ! shouldst thou ever dream of bliss,
And in thine heart believe in this,
Each word should waft an holy kiss,

ἀειθαλείς καθ' ὥρας,
Through ages everlasting.

Or shouldst thou bless, through weal or woe,
My life with love, where'er we go ;
Ah ! would to God this might be so,

ἀειθαλείς καθ' ὥρας,
Through ages everlasting.

But if thy face I ne'er may see,
One pledge I crave when thou art free—
Remember—oh ! remember me,

ἀειθαλείς καθ' ὥρας,
Through ages everlasting.

SONG.

“TELL, LITTLE NIGHTINGALE.”

TELL, little Nightingale,
Tell unto me,
Whence comes a lover's tale,
When hearts are free ?

Sighs like the wooing wind
Melt o'er the lips ;
Tell they his loving mind,
Like honied sips ?

Doth she with ripp'ling smile,
Soft glance divine,
Captive his heart beguile,
Gently entwine ?

Bows he his golden brow
O'er her sweet face,
Whispering, laughing low,
Manly with grace?

Blue eyes, pure flashing beams,
True as the day,
Do they, then, light love-gleams
Lasting for aye?

Whence comes a lover's tale,
When hearts are free?
Tell, little Nightingale,
Tell unto me.

SONG.

"IS THERE A SPIRIT?"

Is there a Spirit of the air

To catch a thought just fallen from the heart,
That has a sympathy so rare

That it can bear my tend'rest sigh apart ;
And sweet with reverence and love,

Can waft that wish which hath escaped on high,
And with angelic care above,

Guide her, my soul's own love, my yearning sigh ?

Is there a Spirit of the earth

Whose perfect form no human eye hath seen,
Whose laugh rings out with merry mirth,

Whose smile from sadness could all sadness wean ;

Whose voice so light could in her ear

Pour forth my burning words with tender fire,
And make her fancy I were near,

And bring the answer back, my heart's desire ?

Is there a Spirit born on high,

Who wresting out man's inmost secret thought,
Speed like a ray across the sky,

Calming the anguish which my soul is fraught ;
Opening the Spirit's golden gate,

Pour the bright radiance of divinest light,
Telling on earth our love-sealed fate,

Hereafter to be blest in heav'n's own sight ?

NATURE'S CHOICEST GIFT.

Lo ! how swiftly the landmarks of Time roll away through
the vista of ages behind us,
Not the conqueror's pride, nor religion, of nations afore-
time the far-shining Phaos ;
Not a trace of the suff'rings of sorrow, no mark which the
wisdom of sages can find us,
Shall live aye through the dream of forgetfulness, steeping
the unfathomed ocean of chaos.

'Tis the undying law of Creation herself, all must fade that
is earthly or mortal ;
Nought shall live for hereafter that's human ; alone 'tis the
life-giving breath of our Maker

That shall last, when this world is no longer, and solely
shall pass through the heavenly portal,
Everlastingly crowned ; let each seek that he may in that
glory at length be partaker.

And the brightest reward to each one during life, for good
deeds in this world, shall be given
To dispel all his trials, whate'er his condition or country, or
gentle, or yeoman,
Ethiope, or Circassian : most exquisite gift of creation
descending from heaven,
Shall for ever delight his existence, a foretaste of Paradise
—Beautiful Woman.

SONGS OF THE CRAFTS.

THE BLACKSMITH'S SONG.

Blow bellows,
Glow flame,
Strong fellows,
True aim ;
Fashion the tire,
Iron and fire ;
Sing we then, boys, while we may,
Merrily, merrily, all the day—
Cheerily, cheerily, hammer away.

Weld iron,
White heat,
Set tire on,
Blows neat ;

Horses we shoe,
Plenty we do ;
Sing we then, boys, while we may,
Merrily, merrily, all the day—
Cheerily, cheerily, hammer away.

Bend metal,
Nought shirk,
Deft petal,
Scroll work ;
Anvil will shape
Flower or grape ;
Sing we then, boys, while we may,
Merrily, merrily, all the day—
Cheerily, cheerily, hammer away.

Turn rivets,
Forge rails,
Win trivets,
Cut nails ;
Blacksmiths will do
Good work and true ;

Sing we then, boys, while we may,
Merrily, merrily, all the day—
Cheerily, cheerily, hammer away.

Hands ready,
Strokes all,
Dints steady,
Sledge fall ;
Hammer and tongs,
Laughter and songs ;
Sing we then, boys, while we may,
Merrily, merrily, all the day—
Cheerily, cheerily, hammer away.

THE BELLRINGER'S SONG.

LOUDLY the Bells ring out,
Calling to pray,
Men from their work without,
Children from play—
Heartily,
Heartily,

Clanging for aye—
What do ye learn ?
 Though life cease
 To win peace,
All men shall yearn.

Clear is the morning light,
 Ushering day,
Making the world so bright,
 Children will play—
 Merrily,
 Merrily,
 Joyful for aye—
What do ye learn ?
 Hope and love,
 Peace above,
Our Faith shall earn.

Warm is the mid-day sun,
 Golden its ray,
Full is the world of fun,
 Children will play—

Cheerily,
Cheerily,
Laughing for aye—
What do ye learn?
Timely deeds,
Humble creeds,
To blessings turn.

Cool is the dewy eve
Passing away,
Soon will the night relieve
Children from play—
Mournfully,
Mournfully,
Sobbing for aye—
What do ye learn?
Mortals will
Surely fill
The sorrowing urn.

Ring we, then, day or night,
This shall we say :

Happiness is our right,
Come let us play—
Joyfully,
Joyfully,
Sounding for aye—
What do ye learn?
Faith will rise
To the skies,
God will discern.

Peal we then eerily,
Ring we our play,
Dying so wearily,
Ending our lay—
Peacefully,
Peacefully,
Silent for aye—
What do ye learn?
Jesus' grave
All shall save,
And no one spurn.

“THE GARDEN OF LOVE.”

IN the garden of life
A bright flower there grows ;
Sweetest perfume is rife,
For each mortal it blows.

This all-fanciful bloom,
A bright gift from above,
Although fleeting its doom,
’Tis the flower of love.

In the spring-time of youth,
With its petals so rare,
All is beauty and truth—
Nought with it may compare.

But once gathered, the rose
Soon will fade from the eye ;
Hidden thorns will disclose,
And its beauty will die.

ONLY "A SIGH".

'Tis light as the down on the wings of a bird,
It cannot be seen, it may scarcely be heard ;
'Tis waft in a dream while the soul is asleep,
'Twill pour where life's waters are troubled and deep,
'Twill ride through the air like a bubble when blown,
'Twill mark how repentance for sin will atone ;
A charm for all woe when a heart would repine,
Of sympathy felt 'tis an echo divine.
It tells of the infinite burden of love,
It speeds like a prayer to the Maker above ;
No word is so tender, no sign is more true,
It falls on love's yearning with life-giving dew ;
It speaks of the spirit while seeking its goal,
It flies to its God—'tis the voice of the soul.

“ ’ *AEI—FOR EVER.* ”

Each set of three verses complete in the initial letter of each verse the whole word *âéí*, and the last verse represents similarly in the initial letter of each line the whole word.

As gently o'er the breezes, love,
 A spirit voice I hear,
 Which tells me of mine absent love—
 I would that thou wert near,
 âéí—for ever,
 âéí—for ever.

E'en like the dew of evening, love,
 So falls the wistful tear,
 When sighing o'er thine absence, love,
 I wish that thou wert near,
 âéí—for ever,
 âéí—for ever.

In solitude and silence, love,
Doth oft thy form appear,
Soft rising in my mem'ry, love,
I fancy thou art near,
â€šâ€šâ€š—for ever,
â€šâ€šâ€š—for ever.

As tempests o'er the ocean, love,
Hang lowering dark and drear,
So gloomy thoughts oppress me, love,
When thou no more art near,
â€šâ€šâ€š—for ever,
â€šâ€šâ€š—for ever.

Ere gentle sleep comes o'er me, love,
I kiss in mem'ry dear,
A tress of curling gold, my love,
Then dream that thou art near,
â€šâ€šâ€š—for ever,
â€šâ€šâ€š—for ever.

I love to hear the throstle, love,
Sing sweetly in mine ear ;

For birds they seem to tell me, love,
That thou wilt soon be near,
 â€š—for ever,
 â€š—for ever.

Ah ! like the breath of roses, love,
Or music soft and clear,
A golden spell comes o'er me, love,
When thou I feel art near,
 â€š—for ever,
 â€š—for ever.

Each glory life may win, my love,
From pen or spur or spear,
I bring to thee, for ever, love,
I know that thou art near,
 â€š—for ever,
 â€š—for ever.

I trust with thee mine heart, love,
No cause hath thine to fear ;
Though far art thou from me, my love,
I love to think thee near,

ἀεί—for ever,

ἀεί—for ever.

As now these gentle lines, my love,

Excuse true love's arrear,

In each one thou wilt prove, my love,

ἀεί for thou art near—

ἀεί—for ever,

ἀεί—for ever.

“DINNA FORGET!”

COULD ain forget how years ago,
At evening's sacred hour,
When lips were young, sweet words would flow,
Beneath the auld kirk tower?

Could ain forget in after years,
When to their new-made bower,
Twa, hand-in-hand, 'mid friendly cheers,
Passed frae the auld kirk tower?

Could ain forget when souls hae sped
Beyond all earthly power,
Sae lonely tears?—for ain lies dead
Beside the auld kirk tower.

THE EYE.

WITHOUT one word, without a sound,
All things the eye can say ;
One simple glance can wrong confound,
Or beaming joy display.

There is a spring within the eye
Too deep for man's control—
The spirit's lustre from on high,
The myst'ry of the soul.

It hath the power of life and death,
When love demands its art ;
For it, without one single breath,
Can save or slay the heart.

It too can bless with silent praise,
And like a beacon shine ;
When sorrow falls, its glance will raise
A sympathy divine.

And when dear eyes seem growing dim,
Soft gazing o'er the past,
Their inward sight is turned to Him
Who gives us light at last.

There is the great All-seeing Eye,
Whose glance streams from above ;
It is the light our souls descry,
The Life-Giver of love.

A HAUNT OF CHILDHOOD.

YOUTH is the time when thought scarce stays to think,
When pleasures seem, like angels, to be won,
When care has never taught the steps to shrink ;
Youth's wings are gilded with Hope's glowing sun.

Young manhood is for man the golden age,
When strength and love is traced in ev'ry line ;
Most excellent of Time's unwritten page,
An earthly foretaste of the life divine.

Then comes a day, the reflex time of thought,
When worldly idols crumble into mould,
When life has proved, experience has taught,
How all that glitters is not always gold.

To me, whene'er I gaze into the past,
Sweet voices echo through the halls of time ;
Bright faces crowd upon my thoughts unasked,
And fill remembrance with a joy sublime.

There in their old exactness, softly rise
Dear faces, filled with love and tender care ;
A father's manly smile, a mother's eyes,
While gazing, seem to vanish into air.

Once more I run along the well-known walk,
Each tree or shrub recalling byegone days ;
Again I hear my little sisters' talk,
My brothers' laughter, with their boyish ways.

My fav'rite corner, there I used to sit,
Beside the laurel near the hawthorn tree ;
But, ah ! a sadness o'er the scene will flit,
'Tis but a picture of the past I see.

Once more I talk as if I ne'er should part
From one who still with fondest love is left,
In mem'ry, yet whose absence breaks my heart,
And leaves me shipwrecked of a life bereft.

I feel again the breath from those dear lips,
I throw my arms around—the empty air !
I fall to kissing—what ?—my finger tips !
I clutch at—nothing—for no thing is there.

Thou darling scene of mem'ries long gone by,
How loved the past, the haunts of years ago,
Thy pictures lingering will never die,
While thoughts recall, while time shall onward flow.

But life will soon be o'er, fain I would groan,
My lips I close on words I would not say ;
A poor old wand'rer in the world alone,
I fold my arms unto myself—and pray.

"TRUE PERFECTION."

TELL me, is it in childhood's fair face that I long,
With its artless and innocent smile,
To perceive the true splendours which solely belong
To that world in which lingers no guile ?

Do I find it where only, on man's noble brow,
The Creator's resemblance is seen ?
Like a breath from the scent-wafted breezes that blow
O'er the shore of that heavenly sheen ?

Not the innocent babe's bright and radiant grace,
Nor a man's lordly countenance show
True perfection on earth,—only woman's sweet face
Is the heaven for mortals below.

RECOLLECTIONS.

A PARTING glance from those
 We well may love,
Can ne'er true solace
 To the lonely prove.
No salve can heal the wounded
 Heart, save one—
A meeting, ne'er to part,
 With thee alone.

Oh ! it brings back in mem'ry that moment of bliss
When you gave that soft whisper, and I that first kiss ;
When we mingled our glances in loving delight,
And we wooed till the evening was wooed by the night.

PLEADINGS.

Do I read by the light on thy bright golden hair,
By the dimples that sport on thy cheek,
By those blue eyes which glance from their dark lashes' lair,
Of the thoughts thou art longing to speak ?

Dost thou still, then, in mind, or in word, or by deed,
Longing sigh, love, for ought 'neath the sun ?
Lo ! then scarce let thy wish but in thought be decreed—
By my life's blood thy wish shall be won.

HAPPINESS BEYOND.

ROMANS VIII. 24, 25.

I EVER sought, with longing undefined,
Some goal unknown, beyond the breaking wave—
Beyond that sea of hopes and fears combined,
Which flows through life, which ends but with the grave.

I sought to win a something unexplained,
A yearning joy, a rapture in the heart ;
I thought that life with love all were obtained,—
Death sternly proved how friends on earth must part.

Compared to spiritual, earthly life
Is dust and ashes in a broken bowl ;
Sweet as their charm, without it home or wife
Is like a body born without a soul.

What, then, can fill that unexpressed desire ?

Can deeds of gratitude repay the love
Which died to save from never-ending fire
The souls of men, our Saviour from above ?

So far as may the finite comprehend
The infinite, how noble 'tis to die
To save the loved one, or her cause defend,—
Give all for her, unknown, without a sigh.

For self-devotion is the rarest bent,
The noblest metal in our heart's alloy ;
Its outcome is all peace and great content,
An earthly foretaste of immortal joy.

The golden portal on the path of life,
That ope's the future to our yearning sight,
Is " Hope," that angel which, dispelling strife,
Despair and darkness, leads us on to light.

Thus, then, the object that I seek is placed
Too far for human knowledge to respond ;
In passing through this life the soul may taste
Some presage of the happiness beyond.

HALLOWE'EN.

List softly to that evening bell,
I love the time,
Light fleeting fast, at parting knell
Ling'ring on earth, then fades to swell
A light divine.

SUNDAY.

Hush, 'tis God's holy day,
God's sacred hour ;
Blest for all souls on earth,
Through Jesus' power.

ON A FUNERAL.

Solemnly, solemnly tolls the bell,
Ringing out Death's ever-warning knell ;
Peace shall repentance, when fleets the breath,
Win to the weary, through Jesus' death.

REST, REST.

Rest, rest !—how shall we rest ?—in Heaven's bright abode,
Received in peace within the bosom of our God.

Rest, rest !—when shall we rest ?—when through this mortal
strife

The wearied soul has past, and death shall end our life.

Rest, rest !—where shall we rest ?—not in this vale of tears,
Where joys will die, and sorrows fill our fleeting years.

Far, far beyond the skies, where angels' voices blest
Their hallowed strains to God pour forth,—there, there is
rest.

*LINES ON THE FUNERAL OF A LITTLE CHILD.**REQUIESCAT IN PACE.*

How blest the hallowed soul like thine,
Fair child, that's freed from mortal shrine ;
A cherub's happy lot shall be
The bright reward allotted thee ;

In peace shalt thou for ever rest,
Reclining on thy Saviour's breast.

PROVERBS XVIII. 24.

A man that many friends would know,
Himself must also friendly show.

ECCLESIASTES XI. 1.

Who freely gives, who kindly lends
A helping hand in times of woe,
Who learns to wait God's holy ends,
A peaceful green old age shall know.

PROVERB.—"BE YE CIRCUMSPECT."

Seek not for notoriety,
It rouseth envy so ;
Then walking with sobriety,
Let's walk—but on tip-toe !

*THE HOLLOWNESS OF SELF-SATISFACTION AND
OUTWARD SHOW.*

Who fancies he can always please,
In love is ne'er sincere ;
Attractions which one only sees
Will ne'er true hearts endear.

PROVERB.

The highest folly seems to be,
In mortals here below,
Of others ev'ry fault to see,
But not their own to know.

"ALL IS THEREFORE BEAUTIFUL."

There is a beauty in all things sublime,
Within this world by erring mortals trod ;
But are not all things 'neath the hand of time
The outcome of the great All-seeing God ?

PROVERB.

Strange truth, in this world 'tis the evil we feel—
 Must ever ingratitude be ?
 All injuries seem written in letters of steel,
 Kind acts in the sands of the sea.

LOVE'S PARADOX.

Would you win love from beauty, disdainful and fair,
 All your love must be told !—
 But of speaking beware !

CONSTANCY.

Is constancy bereft of charm ?
 Inconstancy worth ought ?
 Or if not true, then where's the harm,
 If with appearance fraught ?
 When near the loved one, all is well—
 When absent, who can say
 That 'tis worth having ?—I can tell
 Love's charm is constancy.

LOVE WINS.

In vain a pause with love we make,
Or sign the deeds of peace ;
While yet the gods our pledges take,
Our cooling thoughts will cease.
The little rascal blindly cries—
“ Ne’er strike a foe so small ” ;
While throwing love-dust in our eyes,
He deftly conquers all.
Whoe’er the knots of love would cut,
Beware the ancient saw,
With love to make a truce, is but
A pause in Cupid’s war.

THE RIVER AT EVENTIDE.

Down t'wards the ocean
Streams the shimmering river,
Silent its motion,
Flowing onward for ever ;
Brown-trout and grayling,
Darting and sailing,
Stopping, motionless never.

Floats the love-wisher,
Forget-me-not's dainty spray,
Flits the king-fisher,
Swift skimming with plumage gay ;
Water-bees humming,
Wild bitterns drumming,
At the last footfall of day.

Mist stealing slowly,
 Spreads like a chill wraith rising,
Weird, unholy,—
 Lone moor-hens' haunts surprising,
Throwing a dark pall,
Heralding night-fall,
 Fair Nature's face disguising.

Now mankind sleeping,
 Sees not the stars reflected,
All the world keeping
 Under their watch protected,—
Solemnly guarding,
Good deeds rewarding,
 By divine light directed.

Flow on thou river,
 Letting the moon's pale love-light
On thy breast quiver ;
 Trust not such fickle love-plight,
Soon will such lover
Elsewhere discover
 Still brighter charms in his sight.

On then, for ever,
 Like Time's dread maternity,
Returning never—
 Flowing on without pity ;
Alas ! for a day
That's vanished for aye,
 Lost for all eternity.

THE TEND'REST THOUGHT.

THE tend'rest thought that doth encompass man
 On earth, the nearest to the life sublime
 Of all the hours that bring delight, or can
 Be felt or lived for, the most heavenly time,
 Supremest moment of existence this,
 When sleeping love receives a lover's kiss.

Oh ! happiness unutt'able and rare,
 Of infinite ideal, life divine,
 What holier beauty is there can compare
 To sleeping loved one, all whose love is thine ?
 To hang in rev'rence o'er her dream-lit face,
 And fancy thou an angel's smile can trace.

Then guard in silence o'er her sleeping form
 Her peaceful rest ; her trust in manly love
 Will bless thy choice, and thus thine heart will warm
 In perfect thankfulness to God above ;
 For man's sweet help-mate is man's very life—
 What gem so precious as the name of—wife.

THE SEASONS OF LIFE.

LINES WRITTEN TO A FRIEND BORN IN MARCH.

THOU wouldst, dear lady, I should mark the dawn
That gave thee birth, and with that rosy morn
To mark each season with its gifts sublime,
The passing years that roll away with time.

When first in early youth thy smile was seen,
The March-winds chose thee as their fairy-queen,
And crowned thy birthday with the flowers of *Spring*,
By pixies gathered from some fairy-ring.

The *Summer* saw thy budding roses blush,
And echo whispered to the babbling thrush,
“How someone wooed, and someone seemed to win
The guerdon sought for when true loves begin”.

Thus, then, when *Autumn* tints, with golden hue,
Thy life with memories of friendships true,
Forget not while great happiness is won,
Though all seems ending, life is scarce begun.

Though everything on earth to earth must turn,
'Tis by the past our future joys we learn ;
Though sad the thought that all must die, the past,
Through death, will gain in glory life at last.

Thus when the *Winter*-time of life is nigh,
And thoughts fly upward to the throne on high,
When each has sought at length the Saviour's breast,
There may we meet in everlasting rest.

THOUGHTS ON THE ISLAND OF SARK.

How great is the charm, how entrancing to lie,
Reclining alone 'neath the limitless sky ;
The sound of the murmuring waves, as they break
The sleep of the ocean, seem ever awake ;
The scent-laden breeze scarcely lifts in its lull
The balancing, wandering wings of the gull.

The cliff, with its hollows untrodden by man,
The mighty lone crags rising weird and wan,
O'erhanging, unchanging through æons of time,
Serene in their grandeur, a beauty sublime—
A mark of the infinite power untold,
In lasting defiance of chaos of old.

Those great giant rocks standing solemnly there,
Seem trying Time's long-wearing ages to share ;

The light fleecy cloudland, soft-tinted with red,
Seems hung like a fairy-veil high overhead—
All smiling in sunset, as if well aware
“The ancient of days” everlasting is there.

The handwork of God—oh ! great Father, 'tis Thou
That mark'st with Thy finger mortality's brow ;
The acmè of beauty, extreme of delight,
Is born with the day-dream that wakens the night ;
When dawning each morn but re-echo's the vow—
“With hope, every soul shall the Saviour endow”.

Then still shall I bless all the joys of the earth,
Those pleasures of nature, of manhood, and birth ;
But more than all charm which companions may share,
The blessing I love is beyond all compare,—
Reclining alone 'neath the limitless sky,
In sweetest communion, my Maker and I.

NIAGARA.

ENCHANTING Niagara ! mighty thy roar,
 Stupendous, unrivalled thy great waters pour ;
 Heroic thy music, bewild'ring to hear,
 Eternally booming, astounding the ear—
 Resounding with thunder, as if in reply
 To Heaven's artillery rolling on high.

Then over my soul comes a sense of delight,
 When gazing thy splendours enrapture my sight ;
 Thy grandeur terrific, what words can express
 Such beauty sublime, in thy nature's excess ?
 Transcendent thy glories which kindle the eye,
 The work of a Maker that never will die.

No time can efface, nor will memory fade,
 Recalling those wonders which Heaven hath made ;
 Creation doth here in her spirit unfold,
 Gigantic, appalling, her marvels untold,—
 The powers almighty here seem to display
 The heart of the universe beating for aye.

“*SOUVENIR D'ADIEU.*”

IF writ within one simple line,
All happiness might here combine,
Then every joy would aye be thine,
Unclouded.

Thou leavest me in lone dismay,
'Tis sad to mark thy parting day ;
Be thy returning blithe and gay,
Long wished for.

I would, then, in those days to come,
While yet thy steps far countries roam,
That thou shouldst loving friends at home
Remember.

This “Souvenir” I send to-day,
That swift to thee in token may,
As trusted messenger convey
Good-wishes.

But since to wander is thy choice,
At thy return shall I rejoice,
To hear the music of thy voice
For ever.

Take these good-wishes ere we part,
One balm is left to sooth the smart
(Else would thine absence break my heart)—
Thy coming.

X

REST WILL REWARD.

EACH soul in this life will misfortune discern,
 And pain be endured before pleasure is won ;
 But, “ Never say die ” is the motto we learn,
 For rest will reward us when labour is done.

CHORUS.

Then never give way 'neath a burden of woe,
 For tears will not comfort, and sighs are in vain ;
 Remember the sunshine will banish the snow,
 The buds and the flowers will blossom again.

This world like a racecourse, where mortals may run
 A race, which some seem “ in a canter ” to win ;
 While others are lost ere their course is begun,
 And at the first trial faint-hearted give in.

CHORUS.

Then never give way, etc.

Let sorrow nor trouble diminish your joy ;
Weep not if the pitcher be broken in twain ;
Nor suffer small trials your life to annoy,
For soon will your happiness triumph again.

CHORUS.

Then never give way, etc.

Let vanity, then, with ill-temper depart,
Each earnestly practising, teach with delight
The lessons which mercy and love will impart—
Thus enter eternity joyful and bright.

CHORUS.

Then never give way, etc.

HOW WHISPER THE HOURS.

THE HOURS.

How whisper the hours—
 All moments of day,
 Like bees to the flowers,
 Have words which they say.

MORN.

The morning will waken
 Kind actions begun,
 Old friendships unshaken
 Revive with the sun.

NOON.

The glory of daytime
 Sheds hope in each breast,
 Renewing our lifetime
 With sunshine and rest.

E'EN.

The fading of daylight,
Ere night has begun,
Soft dies, like the twilight,
Ere life is undone.

NIGHT.

The darkest of sorrow,
Like shadows of night,
Will melt on the morrow,
With dawning of light.

TIME.

Thus ev'ry short hour
Some thought will possess,
'Till days in their power
Our life shall confess.

A WISH.

"A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR."

IF I could wish all, I would win
The world with all its charm—
All blessed joys of kith and kin,
A peaceful life and calm.

If with a wish all riches came,
And beauty smiled on me,
Then would I wish them in your name,
And shower all on thee.

May all the smiles of Christmas-tide,
The merriest of cheer,
And every happiness beside,
Be yours this bright New Year.

LAMENT OF QUEEN MARIE STUART,

DURING HER LONG IMPRISONMENT IN LOCH LEVEN CASTLE.

How oft 'twas told
She would have died, had she not lived—for love.

QUEEN MARIE.

ALAS ! that my sad sorrow
Re-echo's only round these empty walls,
Increasing with each morrow
Their oft-reiterated longing calls.
While birds without are flying,
Here am I held within these narrow bounds ;
They sing, their loves replying,
While I but multiply my mournful sounds.

Oh ! wearily,
In dread restraint,
So drearily
I make my plaint.
No heart have I,
To sound of lute,
In melody
My thoughts to suit.
Each tear-drop falls
With sad intent ;
To you, ye walls,
I make lament.

Ah ! memory, unkind art thou,
In that thou dost recall
Those happy hours, when love's sweet vow
To me seemed all in all ;
The pleasing dream of days gone bye
But makes me wish to dream—and die.

What injury of innocence ;
My fate, 'tis hard to bear,—

Nor any earthly recompense

May conquer my despair.

Will after ages shed for thee

One tear in pity—poor Marie ?

How long the days in stillness past

Within this lonely cell ;

My hopeless hoping dies at last—

Could I too die as well !

Their whisp'ring silence seems to say :

“ Marie, thy grief must live—for aye ”.

Then, haunting memory, depart !

Return no more to me—

Else will thy coming break my heart,

For all eternity.

Yet stay !—canst thou the future tell ?

If love's in heaven—is hate—in hell ?

*SONG OF GEORGE DOUGLAS TO QUEEN
MARIE STUART,*

PREVIOUS TO HER ESCAPE (THROUGH HIS HELP) FROM LOCH LEVEN
CASTLE, AND FINAL RECAPTURE AND EXECUTION.

ALONE, yet not alone !

With all the world around
To choose from, only one
To suit my longing heart is found,
Of all the spots on earth,—for lo ! my soul intently clings
To thee, Marie !

I cannot tell the place,
Though, by some subtle art,
I seem to see thy face
Reflected in my love-sick heart ;
The music of some voice within my spirit ever sings
Of thee, Marie !

Oh ! wanton heart is mine ;
I know thy perfect love ;
Though every thought is thine,
I flutter fearful as the dove,
To think that absence from thy sight may bring forgetfulness
On thee, Marie !

Ah ! where art thou, Marie ?
I yearn with sole intent
To gaze once more on thee ;
Some sorr'wing spell hangs imminent !
Lo ! 'tis for thee my life seems filled with sadd'ning fretfulness,
My own Marie !

One word still let me say,
Waft it o'er land and sea !
" My love is thine for aye ;
My Queen, be true for aye to me ;
May we in future state, when souls shall meet, far, far away,
Be one, Marie ".

Then speed these words to thee,

Where'er thou art ; I sigh,

Mine own, thy face to see

But once again before I die :

I know not why, though something seems to bid me say

“ Good-bye, Marie ! ”

MARY! MARY!

SONG OF GEORGE DOUGLAS TO QUEEN MARY STUART.

(HE WAS CAUGHT BY HER BEAUTY, AND IT WAS THROUGH HIS HELP
THAT QUEEN MARY ESCAPED FROM LOCH LEVEN CASTLE.)

DEAR is thy love to me,

Mary ! Mary !

Are not true sighs from the heart,

Is not fond memory,

Mary ! Mary !

Whispering, " Why did we part " ?

Still thy sweet smile I see,

Mary ! Mary !

Echo's thy voice in mine ear,

Lilt of a " love-dittie,"

Mary ! Mary !

Music that angels may hear.

I, thy true knight ever,

Mary ! Mary !

Love ne'er has reigned more supreme ;

Nought can true hearts sever,

Mary ! Mary !

'Tis but of thee that I dream.

THE "WHITE LADY".

A LEGEND.

I WANDERED once within the woods,
Along the flowing stream ;
And plucking dainty fairy-hoods,
Allowed my thoughts to dream.

When, lo ! I cast my listless glance
Across the silv'ry brook,
And there beheld, as in a trance,
A maiden's smiling look.

She turned not from my eager eyes,
Nor frowned in angry thought ;
But from her lips, in sweet surprise,
Fell words of kind import :

" O ! gentle youth, why dost thou sigh ?
Wouldst thou from me depart ?
I love the brightness of thine eye,
Thy loss would break my heart.

"Come hither, love, when falls the gloam,
That I thy glance may know ;
But ne'er mayst o'er these waters roam
Which swift between us flow."

Next day, in joy, at even-tide,
I sought the trysting place ;
And there along the water-side
I spied her heaven-lit face.

And day by day, my soul's intent
Recalled me t'wards the bank,
Where flowed the stream, through break and bent,
Till evening cold and dank.

She too was there, with waving hair,
And murmurs soft and true ;
At length, in madness of despair,
I rushed the waters through !

Alas ! how rash !—what fatal spell
Fades through the dying light—
Her form dissolves across the dell :
'Tis but—a "Lady White".

THE RULES OF LOVE.

SWEET woman's smile
Will man beguile ;
Wouldst thou the ladies please ?
Then bear in mind,
For aye you'll find
The golden rules are these :

If " she " be young,
Then words are strung
In vain, unless with sighs
You fire with art
Her maiden heart,
And love beams in your eyes.

If " she " be old,
Love's deeds are told
Of past knight-errantry ;

And soon with zest
Will fire her breast
Your tales of gallantry.

But if somewhere
The "ladie fayre"
Anigh the "forties" be,
Then boldly ply,
With lip and eye,
Nor fear love's penalty.

But this be told,
For young and old,
This rule for great and small :
"Let every thought
Of 'Her' be fraught,
Let 'Her' be all in all".

SOMETHING BEYOND.

THERE is a poem, which, unwritten rings
Throughout the senses with responsive roll—
Those tender numbers which the spirit sings,
Which hearts alone re-echo with the soul.

It lies within the picture of the past,
Enclosed with all the wealth of childhood's ways,
Encompassing each moment, and at last
It swells the yearning of our later days.

Within, without the life of ev'ry man,
It tells of something greater than delight
In all the gifts this world has given, or can—
It sings of beauty, formless, infinite.

It feels th' unutterable in Nature's ways,
The wond'rous glory of the morning sky,
The silent fading of the sunset rays,
The splendid linking of the soul on high.

But, oh ! beyond the confines of this earth,
It seems to sing some great unwritten line,
Which marks the myst'ry breathed upon our birth,
The work eternal of the Hand Divine.

“L’AIGUILLON DE LA CHAIR.”

THERE flits an old-world dream across the field
Of time, which tells of harmony beyond
All comprehension ; when the human soul,
First wafted from the mighty Hand above,
Sped joyously along the plains of earth—
Part loving and part loved,—one perfect whole.

In wond’rous bliss, this two-in-one beheld
The varied glories of the beauteous world ;
And wandering, grew strong in double love,
Until they twain in utter unison
Seemed one great acmè of all-perfect form,—
They two with one consent made life complete.

Oh ! blest intention of Creation’s breast !
How infinitely beautiful the thought,

Which made man perfect in his second self,
And gave him woman as her choicest gift,—
Which welded, as it were, his better half
For him, predestined all his life to bless.

Thus, then, they lived ; angelic ecstasy
Scarce could with their surpassing joy compare ;
Not all the ample pleasures Nature sheds
Throughout creation, with a hand sublime,
Could equal their enchanting bliss, nor add
One single happiness they did not share.

On earth was life thus perfectly begun—
Existence seemed to equal the divine ;
Except—that fallibility lay hid,
The canker-worm of all beneath the sun ;
And so, behold ! disturbing signs arose
Between those two-in-one, and made them twain !

Far o'er the earth there lurked a spirit fell,
Of weird form, green-eyed, of woeful mien,
And wan ; within each hidden coign below,
This hideous mystery lay filled with spite ;

Thus everywhere, around, above, below,
The curse of jealousy and hate was found.

Oh ! why does passion, councillor of hell,
Intrude, uncalled-for, in the human breast ?
Disturber of all peace, the fatal pall
Which winds round all true action of the heart,
Distorting love and goodness with despite,
And turning ancient friendships into gall ?

'Twas even thus when first the perfect one,
Proclaimed the type of the Creator's self ;
Behold ! the gentler to the nobler half
Declared itself no second to itself :
(For they were two-in-one) dissension grew,
Until in lively jealousy of self,
The woman left the manhood to despair,
And wandered forth her destiny to seek.

Now long, lone ages since those times have past,
Man still is yearning for the days gone bye ;
No sooner sets his new-born foot on earth,
Than guided by some instinct hid within
His breast, pursues throughout the rolling world,
Until he finds his long-lost better half.

SYMPATHY.

BOTH heart and senses love the touch
 Of sympathetic lips ;
Of all the gifts, 'tis daintiest
 From dainty finger-tips.
But if to give, no fancy charm
 Can equal honied sips,
When young true-love shall chance to meet
 With sympathetic lips.

The bosom of enchanted love,
 With sympathetic thrill,
Seems bound to make the feelings throb—
 Aye, when the lips are still.
Some soft intentions seem to work,
 Unknown, "their own sweet will" ;
One chance caress will rouse delight,
 With sympathetic thrill.

There is a mystery sublime,
 Of sympathetic thought,
When sighs are interwoven long,
 Ere lips the truth have taught ;
When from the world's antipodes
 True-loves their fates have sought,
Led on by some magnetic strain
 Of sympathetic thought.

But thrilling lips, and thoughts and sighs,
 And sympathetic bliss,
Will sometimes hide beneath the rose
 An ugly thorn, I wis !
In spite of all the joys of life,
 There's nought comes up to this—
The presage sweet of paradise—
 A sympathetic kiss.

LOVE MUST WIN.

THE moon must wane before the sun,
The sun itself decline
In lurid gold ; when day is done
Again the moon will shine.

So doth the world's ambition try
To crush the soul by stealth ;
Though hands are wed, man ne'er can buy
True-love with endless wealth.

The love-sick heart may loose its hold,
And for its mistress sigh ;
Though hearts be sold for gain of gold,
True-love will never die.

A SIGH.

It is gone like the down on the wings of the wind,
Like the spirit of time that is lost in a day,
Lightly fleeting from memory, leaving behind
But the trace of life's happiness passing for aye.

For the soul's gentle yearning, oft lost in a sigh,
Or the heart that must suffer and linger alone,
Flying off to the angel that watches on high,
Sweeter comfort receives when life's journey is done.

'Tis the outcome of sorrow, precursor of joy,
'Tis the voice of the soul's early dawning of love ;
'Tis the sign in our hearts of that golden alloy
Which shall lead us at length to the heaven above.

TO THE NORTH STAR.

STAR of the north on the face of the waters,
Friend of the shepherd o'er valley and lea,
Shining, the queen of the firmament's daughters,
Pointing the way over mountain and sea.

There dost thou watch in the dome of creation ;
Pure is thy beauty, thou gem of the light,
Centre of all the aerial nation,
Guide of the sailor through peril of night.

Infinite wonder, so solemnly gleaming,
What are the mysteries 'neath thy control ?
Art thou the spirit that, tenderly beaming,
Marks in the heavens the path of the soul ?

O ! that my heart might take flight in the morning,
Follow thee, chasing day's earliest breath ;
And as my guide, take thy heavenly warning,
Fading in glory to live after death.

APPEAL TO LOVE.

LOVE ! what a power art thou !
How dost thou conquer all !
Men 'neath thy yoke must bow,
Else to thy darts they fall.

God of all sweet delights !
Prince of the pearl-winged dove !
Sleep we enchanted nights,
Under thy power, O love !

Bringing the brave to seek,
Beauty her tryst shall give ;
How are the mighty weak
'Neath thy provocative !

Spirit of love on earth,
Source of all happiness !
Earliest guide from birth,
Ever our hearts possess !

THE TROUBADOUR.

A SERENADE.

A LOVER sighing without hope,
Bethought how love creeps in ;
If but some sweet love-spell could ope
The heart, his soul would win.

He seeks at length his tale to tell,
With strains at early dawn,
Though ne'er the name he loves so well
Can from his lips be drawn.

He sings beneath her window, filled
With passion's eager fire
Restrained ; his words are gently trilled,
With soul-entrancing lyre.

"Thine eyes are soft ! thy glance divine !
Pure fairy depths of blue ;
Ah ! would those perfect charms were mine—
They ne'er could prove untrue.

“ Love nestles oft within the rose,
And makes the petals flush ;
But lips with tints as warm as those
Would make the ruby blush.

“ Thy voice is like the murm’ring sea,
When music fills the air ;
The swan excelled in harmony
Would die in dumb despair.

“ Each ‘ trait ’ delights the livelong day,
Night wafts them in a dream ;
Ah ! picture all my heart would say,
Awake love’s dawning gleam.

“ If thou perchance couldst hear me now,
And grant one mark of love,
My heart were thine—I swear !—I vow !
For life !” By jove !—her glove !

THE GARDEN OF LIFE.

THE garden of life, where in pleasant pursuit
Of pastime and beauty, men wander along,
Oft culling the choicest of flowers and fruit,
Or merrily dancing with music and song.

There are in that garden bright flowers so rare,
Once breathed their sweet fragrance, the senses will fall
Beneath an enchantment surpassing compare,
But once in a lifetime such joy may enthrall.

These blossoms so lovely, ungathered will bloom,
A foretaste for each one of heaven above ;
Once pluck them, beware of their magical doom—
For, lo ! there are thorns 'neath the roses of love.

Go seek in that garden thy flower of fate,
Pluck boldly, fair youth, that blest rose-bud of life ;
And cherish with honour thy tender love-mate—
That rose in its fragrance will blossom as wife.

HOW SWEET IT IS TO PRESS!

How sweet it is to press the hand of love,
 To hear the voice which is the heart's delight,
 Whose music tender, like the cooing dove,
 Re-echo's gently in its fairy flight.

But, oh ! how infinitely beautiful
 To gaze into the deep, soft, dreamy eye,
 So rare, unutterably wonderful,—
 An earthly foretaste of the joy on high.

In weal or woe, how sweet a lover's care ;
 When woman loves, they twain must never part ;
 Once break the golden chain, his love's despair
 Will die,—no time will mend her broken heart.

Were all the good and beautiful on earth
 Twice-told, once showered from the realms above,
 And time had given with the millenium birth
 All perfect joys in one—its name were Love !

"THE HARD WORLD."

HERE I lie on the cold grey stones—

The snow is falling,

Covering silently my bones

With chill appalling.

Men passing by, they step aside

Where I am lying ;

No pity stays their onward stride,

While I am dying.

"One morsel !—give me help, kind sir,

For I am sinking ;"

No words of woe his breast will stir,

All from me shrinking.

There goes a man whose mead of health

Were scarce worth buying,

All shattered in the race for wealth,

While I am dying.

There passes one whose little child,
With kindly feeling,
Attention calls, in accents wild—
His tears are stealing.
But though the boy points out my woe,
In pity crying,
Their quickening footsteps onward go,
While I am dying.

Great God ! and is Thy pity now
On me descending ?
Oh ! save me through my Saviour's vow,
That love unending
May take me from this pain and strife,
And upward flying,
My soul may win eternal life,
While I am dying.

DUTY.

"OUR NATIONAL TRADITION."

THERE is a heroism in front of death,
 Which wears a beauty next to the divine :
 'TIS prompted by the spell of "Duty's" breath,
 Which marks all England with a golden line.

It is that glory running through the race
 Of Britain's youth, from immemorial time—
 That wins those honours time can ne'er efface,
 That makes self-sacrifice a joy sublime.

'TIS "Duty" leads men tranquilly to die,
 In face of odds—aye ! be they ten to one ;
 So long as "England's honour" is the cry,
 Her sons will fight until the day is done.

How oft through battle eagerly,
With stricken limb, has one returned in joy
To die, and shown how regally
He held the golden thread without alloy.

It glows like sunshine round the names of those
Who fell in fight in Egypt's rapid war ;
Nought caring for the heat, nor rebel blows,
Fell gallantly 'neath "Duty's" guiding star.

Aye, when the day was won, again the gold
Of England's valour shone with bright array ;
The story of brave Gill and Carrington was told,
And Palmer's pluck has marked a noble day.

We mourn their loss, who, setting life aside,
For "Duty" died ; then mark the golden scroll—
Long live thy mem'ry, sons of England's pride,—
Bright shine thy names in honour's lustre roll.

NOTE.—Gill, Carrington, and Palmer were massacred shortly after the battle of Tel-el-Kebir, by the false actions of pretended friendship amongst Bedouin chiefs.—See *The World* newspaper, 1st Nov., 1882.

*IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO FELL DURING
THE CAMPAIGN IN EGYPT, 1882.*

"ALEXANDRIA," "KAFR-DOWAR," "KASS-ASSIN," "TEL-EL-KEBIR,"
"CAIRO."

(Written on the receipt of the news of the victory of Tel-el-Kebir,
15th Sept., 1882.)

Sons of the brave,
There do ye lie ;
Sorrow her vigil in solitude keeps ;
Peace be your grave,
Soldiers that die,
Ye whom old England in memory weeps.

Land of the flood,
Mark their last breath ;
Slain for thy country, there rigid and cold,

Covered with blood,
Wounded to death,
Dying in glory, like heroes of old.

Tel-el-Kebir,
Won with the dawn ;
Cavalry leading the Highland Brigade ;
Irishmen cheer !—
Swiftly the morn
Proves of what stuff British soldiers are made.

Charging the while,
Gallantly led,
Nobly our loved ones have fallen in fight ;
Land of the Nile,
England has bled—
Honour rewards the defenders of right.

Sacred the place,
Far o'er the sand,
There where each soldier is laid in his rest ;
Nought can efface
Memory's hand,
Marked for all time in each Englishman's breast.

“TOI QUE JE CRAINS D’AIMER.”

“THOU that I fear to love !”

’Tis the cry of the fledgling’s heart,
When, like the wounded dove,
It has first felt the fatal dart.

“Thou that I fear to love !”

When it comes from the manly breast,
Seems like a gauntlet glove,
As a challenge to love addressed.

“Thou that I fear to love !”

When ’tis heard in the tones of age,
Seems like a voice above,
Which is reading a written page.

“LOVE TAKES WINGS AND FLIES AWAY.”

BEHOLD, what a wonderful charm have I !

Rosina, 'twas found in the garden mould ;
This great caterpillar shall safely lie,
His coat is so lovely, all velvet and gold.

Beware, dearest Lily, of love's surprise,
For Lubin I saw at the garden gate ;
I fear for the love of those soft brown eyes—
Don't hunt caterpillars, my darling, so late.

Then Lily she pouted and tossed her head—
The insect she quickly in safety lay—
And soon with her Lubin in love was wed,
The insect to chrysalis turning that day.

Thus happy in love did “our ladie” live—
The chrysalis lay in its dormant state—
And life seemed to her all its joys to give,
This sweet honeymoon and her love-forlorn mate.

But soon did young Lubin in love grow cold,
And Lily she drooped, and the chrysalis broke ;
Love's butterfly fled, as Rosina told ;—
How many a true word is uttered in joke.

*LINES ON THE SOUND OF DISTANT
CHURCH BELLS.*

JOYFULLY chiming, the bells in the air
Sound like the echo of angels at prayer ;
Far o'er the breezes the tale that they bring :
“ Some one is born—’tis a birth-rede we ring—
Peace unto all ”.

Lightly the day-dream awakens the dawn—
Bells they ring sweetly, all smiles with the morn ;
“ Goodwill to man ” brightly shines with the sun ;
Blushing, the bride and her lover are one—
Peace unto all.

Mournfully, wearily, sobbing alone,
Weeping in silence,—the loved one is gone ;
One there is left, whom the angels can tell—
“ Sorrow all dies with the last solemn knell—
Peace unto all ”.

A CHANCE WORD.

A CASUAL thought, some half-expressed desire,
 A sudden gleam of unexpected light,
 A slight similitude, will set the soul on fire,
 And conjure up on our forgetful sight
 The happy memories of bygone days,
 Of friends, or fancies, long since passed away—
 Will light again those golden sunny rays
 Of joyous youth, in him whose hairs are gray.

'Twill picture oft the opening years of life,
 When noble wishes teeming through the mind,
 With high ambitions urged with projects rife,
 Would echo bravely, "Seek and ye shall find".
 Again, 'twill picture how those days have sped—
 The hopes and fears, the magic of success,
 The after-shadow, when the light has fled,
 And prizes lost we thought we should possess.

'Twill picture, too, those times of human bliss,
When first the heart meets heart in sacred love ;
When first in pure delight the holy kiss
Seems like a hallowed symbol from above.
Then scenes will change like some dissolving view—
The face of one is seen—ah ! sad to tell,—
In that last sleep which comes but to renew
That life the Saviour claims in heaven to dwell.

And then 'twill picture many a joy and woe—
Our better deeds where God's great love is shown ;
Perchance 'twill picture, with an after-glow,
Some memories which seem to make us groan.
But oh ! the blessed mercy of our Lord
So wills it that our ills we may forget,
And turns to comfort each unhappy word,
Sets on each brow the immortal coronet.

LINES

ON RETURNING (AFTER A LAPSE OF YEARS) A BUNCH OF
DRIED VIOLETS.

IN thought these flowers the scent receives
Of memories long past ;
The perfume of their dead dry leaves
Recall sweet words, unasked.

'Tis but a withered history
Of times now past away,
Which mark a lover's victory
O'er what is lost to-day.

These "*Violets*" I send to thee—
Their name sweet wishes prove !
Invert the letters, you will see
The answer still, "'*Tis Love*".

SPRING.

WHAT is it charms the fancy,
What will make the Poet sing ?
It is the sight of Nancy,
Crowned with all the flowers of Spring !

'Tis Nancy's fairy singing
That the Poet loves to hear ;
Her voice like song-birds ringing
Their sweet love-notes in the ear.

The air is primrose-laden,
Lowly violets around,
The daisy, like some maiden,
Tipped with blushes on the ground.

The golden dandelion
Turns his lustre t'ward the sky,
While April keeps her eye on
Every love-winged butterfly.

But Nancy is my darling,
More than flowers or hawthorne tree ;
More than nightingale or starling
Are my Nancy's lips to me.

LONE THOUGHTS.

I SOUGHT the open moorland on a bright September day,
When lightly round the uplands golden aureoles would play;
When radiant Nature's beauty, in sweet Nature's beauty
drest,

With harmony so perfect, seemed to set the soul at rest.
The wild bee swiftly humming as he sped upon the wing,
Proclaiming in his joyful song : " I am the honey king " ;
And in his track there followed, with a scent across the skies,
The heather-laden zephyr, like a charm from paradise.
The gentle breath of evening, softly wafted on the breeze,
Came fraught with sighing murmurs of the distant summer
seas.

I love that open moorland, with its balmy trackless waste,
When down the sun has wended, in its sudden Autumn
haste,

When twilight fades in silence, and the evening shimmer
dies,

While off the lake's still surface a "White Lady" seems to
rise.

And when the moon comes slowly peeping o'er the moun-
tain crag,

And breaks its pale reflection at the "wat'ring" of the stag ;

When comes the noble monarch, with his timid train, to
drink,

All standing there in silence by the solemn water's brink—

'Tis then a thankful feeling round my senses will increase,

Unspeakable enjoyment of a full and perfect peace.

I love the open moorland, and the lapwing's plaintive call,

The twitt'ring of the rising lark, whose notes so blithely
fall—

The pure delight in breathing, free from human thought or
care,

A feeling of divinity's soft glory in the air.

Life ever seems light-hearted, as alone I stand and gaze ;

The words which crowd within me sing the great Creator's
praise.

I love the ragged beauty of those cliffs along the shore ;
No sound, no sign of mortal man, the ocean's distant roar,
The weird-looking peat-hag, and the granite-laden sod,
Around the great horizon ; but the master hand of God.

I love the open moorland ; there in solitude I sing—
My spirit seems to wander like an Angel on the wing ;
As falls the dewy twilight, and the stars begin to shine,
Their still and distant voices speak with harmony divine.
I know not, oh ! I know not, how a gentle sound will tell,
“ 'Tis there among their glories, after death, the soul shall
 dwell ” ;

Those guardians on the pathway t'wards the infinite unseen
Light up the dome of heaven with their diamond-sprinkled
 sheen ;

They tell of wond'rous beauty, though they utter ne'er a
 word,

Like samples brightly shining of the glory of the Lord.

THE VOICE OF A FRIEND.

How brightly the day-dream while passing away—

Dear faces swift fleeting, before us will send,
When past is the reverie, echos will play,
Recalling again the sweet voice of a friend.

How oft in the world, when thoughts of the past

Seem scarce to our lives any beauty to lend,
As sunbeams will shine where once shadows were cast,
So falls on the ear the sweet voice of a friend.

Oh ! tell me not, sadly, that life has no charm,

No joys that are real, nor sorrows will end ;
Soft love-notes there are which dispel all alarm,
Like sounds which recall the sweet voice of a friend.

What pleasure so great to the world-weary heart,

What sympathy aye with our tears will blend ?
When weeping, through death from some dear one we part,
No comfort so sweet as the voice of a friend.

A VISION OF LIFE.

WHEN shining alone at the fading of night
The star of the morning will pale into light,
And die ere the lips of the monarch of day
Have chased with a kiss all the dewdrops away,
And rising in glory the rays of the sun
Will tell how in mercy creation was done—

I followed in spirit, and saw from afar
A smile on the face of that wonder-lit star ;
And wafted so gently, as if in a dream,
An angel went by with a seraph-like gleam ;
And there in his arms lay, in silent repose,
An infant, who clasped on his bosom a rose.

I followed in spirit again, as the star
Beamed out into radiance, smiling afar—
Methought that a youth in the sunshine at length
Strode forth with his bride, in his beauty and strength,
And seeming he placed, where her golden hair glows,
The full-blooming spray of a tender white rose.

I followed again in the spirit afar,
And fancied a tear-drop fell down from the star ;
And lo ! as the day-dream seemed fading in light,
Two angels passed on through the shadow of night ;
And there at my feet lay mortality's clothes,
And nought but a thorn was there left of the rose.

GIFTS OF LIFE.

THE wind is common property of all,
 The gleams of sunshine and the rains that fall ;
 All nature bows beneath death's fatal ban,
 But life immortal is the gift of man.

The bird is prompted, through some inner state,
 To build in Spring-time with his feathered mate ;
 Though horses' instinct equals the canine,
 The human reason is a gift divine.

Our mortal senses are of wond'rous kind,
 The full reflection of immortal mind,
 Filled up with every blessing from above,
 And made quite perfect with the gift of love.

But more than all the beauties of the sky,
 One gift beyond what angels e'er can buy,
 To man is given, which doth our souls enthrall—
 'Tis woman,—one I know surpasses all !

LINES

ON BEHOLDING A PORTRAIT OF A DEAR DEPARTED
FRIEND OF EARLY BOYHOOD.

A SIMPLE canvas daubed with paint,
And yet what wond'rous part,
Which gives of very life the taint,
Restored through limner's art.

A portrait is a second self,
Which marks for all the world,
How nearly has reflection's elf
Her perfect flag unfurled.

Thou art the likeness of my friend,
Again I see his face ;
No painted lines my heart can mend,
Nor his loved smile replace.

